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VOLUME XIII.

THE ART OF CONVERSATION

AND

OTHER PAPERS

BY

THOMAS DE QUINCEY

EDINBURGH
ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK
MDCCCLXIII

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SEVERAL papers in this Volume were revised by the Author; others are republished in their original form.

Two of those in the latter class demand a special remark, in justice to the Author's memory. The "Letters to a Young Man whose Education has been Neglected," were always kept in abeyance, with the intention of being considerably extended. In like manner, the paper "On the Knocking at the Gate in Macbeth," was marked out for alteration and enlargement.

EDINBURGH, *January* 1803.

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LETTERS TO A YOUNG MAN

WHOSE EDUCATION HAS BEEN NEGLECTED.

LETTER I.

MY DEAR SIR,—When I had the pleasure of meeting you at Ch[illegible], for the second time in my life, I was much concerned to remark the general dejection of your manner. I may now add, that I was also much surprised; your cousin's visit to me having made it no longer a point of delicacy to suppress that feeling. General report had represented you as in possession of all which enters into the worldly estimate of happiness—great opulence, unclouded reputation, and freedom from unhappy connexions. That you had the priceless blessing of unfluctuating health, I know upon your own authority. And the concurring opinions of your friends, together with my own opportunities for observation, left me no room to doubt that you wanted not the last and mightiest among the sources of happiness —a fortunate constitution of mind, both for moral and intellectual ends. So many blessings as these, meeting in the person of one man, and yet all in some mysterious way defeated and poisoned, presented a problem too interesting, both to the selfish and the generous curiosity of men, to

make it at all wonderful that at that time and place you should have been the subject of much discussion. Now and then some solutions of the mystery were hazarded; in particular, I remember one from a young lady of seventeen, who said, with a positive air, "That Mr. M—'s dejection was well known to arise from an unfortunate attachment in early life," which assurance appeared to have great weight with some other young ladies of sixteen. But, upon the whole, I think that no account of the matter was proposed at that time which satisfied myself, or was likely to satisfy any reflecting person.

At length the visit of your cousin L—, in his road to Th—, has cleared up the mystery in a way more agreeable to myself than I could have ventured to anticipate from any communication short of that which should acquaint me with the entire dispersion of the dejection under which you laboured. I allow myself to call such a disclosure agreeable, partly upon the ground that where the grief or dejection of our friends admits of no important alleviation, it is yet satisfactory to know that it may be traced to causes of adequate dignity; and, in this particular case, I have not only that assurance, but the prospect of contributing some assistance to your emancipation from these depressing recollections, by co-operating with your own efforts in the way you have pointed out for supplying the defects of your early education.

L— explained to me all that your own letter had left imperfect; in particular, how it was that you came to be defrauded of the education to which even your earliest and humblest prospects had entitled you; by what heroic efforts, but how vainly, you laboured to repair that greatest of losses; what remarkable events concurred to raise you to your present state of prosperity; and all other circumstances

which appeared necessary to put me fully in possession of your present wishes and intentions.

The two questions which you addressed to me through him I have answered below: these were questions which I could answer easily and without meditation; but for the main subject of our future correspondence, it is so weighty, and demands such close attention (as even *I* find, who have revolved the principal points almost daily for many years), that I would willingly keep it wholly distinct from the hasty letter which I am now obliged to write; on which account it is that I shall forbear to enter at present upon the series of letters which I have promised, even if I should find that my time were not exhausted by the answers to your *two questions below.*

To your first question,—Whether to you, with your purposes and at your age of thirty-two, a residence at either of our English universities, or at any foreign university, can be of much service?—my answer is, firmly and unhesitatingly, No. The majority of the undergraduates of your own standing, in an academic sense, will be your juniors by twelve or fourteen years; a disparity of age which could not but make your society mutually burthensome. What, then, is it that you would seek in a university? Lectures? These, whether public or private, are surely the very worst modes of acquiring any sort of accurate knowledge; and are just as much inferior to a good book on the same subject, as that book hastily read aloud, and then immediately withdrawn, would be inferior to the same book left in your possession, and open at any hour, to be consulted, retraced, collated, and in the fullest sense studied. But, besides this, university lectures are naturally adapted, not so much to the general purpose of communicating knowledge, as to the specific purpose of meeting a particular form of exami-

nation for degrees, and a particular profession to which the whole course of the education is known to be directed. The two single advantages which lectures can ever acquire, to balance those which they forego, are either, *first*, the obvious one of a better apparatus for displaying illustrative experiments than most students can command; and the cases where this becomes of importance it cannot be necessary to mention; *second*, the advantage of a rhetorical delivery, when *that* is of any use (as in lectures on poetry, &c.) These, however, are advantages more easily commanded in a great capital than in the most splendid university. What, then, remains to a university, except its libraries? And with regard to those the answer is short: to the greatest of them undergraduates have not free access; to the inferior ones (of their own college, &c.) the libraries of the great capitals are often equal or superior; and, for mere purposes of study, your own private library is far preferable to the Bodleian or the Vatican. To you, therefore, a university can offer no attraction except on the assumption that you see cause to adopt a profession; and, as a degree from some university would in that case be useful (and indispensable except for the bar), your determination on this first question must still be dependent on that which you form upon the second.

In this second question you call for my opinion upon the eleventh chapter of Mr. Coleridge's Biographia Literaria, as applied to the circumstances in which you yourself are placed. This chapter, to express its substance in the most general terms, is a dissuasion from what Herder, in a passage there quoted, calls "Die Authorschaft;' or, as Mr. Coleridge expresses it, "the trade of authorship;" and the amount of the advice is,—that, for the sake of his own happiness and respectability, every man should adopt some

trade or profession, and should make literature a subordinate pursuit. On this advice, I understand you to ask, *first*, whether it is naturally to be interpreted, as extending to cases such as yours; and, *second*, if so, what is my judgment on such advice so extended? As to my judgment upon this advice, supposing it addressed to men of your age and situation, you will easily collect, from all which I shall say, that I think it as bad as can well be given.

Waiving this, however, and to consider your other question—in what sense, and with what restrictions, the whole chapter is to be interpreted—that is a point which I find it no easy matter to settle. Mr. Coleridge, who does not usually offend by laxity and indecision of purpose, has, in this instance, allowed the very objects of his advice to shift and fluctuate before him; and, from the beginning to the end, nothing is firmly constructed for the apprehension to grasp, nor are the grounds of judgment steadily maintained. From the title of the chapter (an affectionate exhortation to those who in early life feel themselves disposed to become authors), and, from the express words of Herder, in the passage cited from him as the final words of the chapter, which words discountenance "authorship" only as "zu früh oder unmässig gebraucht" (practised too early, or with too little temperance), it would have been a natural presumption that Mr. Coleridge's counsels regarded chiefly or altogether the case of very youthful authors, and the unfortunate thirst for premature distinction. And if this had been the purpose of the chapter, excepting that the evil involved in such a case is not very great, and is generally intercepted by the difficulties which prevent, and overpunished by the mortifications which attend any such juvenile acts of presumption, there could have been no room for differing with Mr. Coleridge, except upon the propriety of occupying his

great powers with topics of such trivial interest. But this, though from the title it naturally should have been, is *not* the evil, or any part of it, which Mr. Coleridge is contemplating. What Mr. Coleridge really has in his view are two most different objections to literature, as the principal pursuit of life; which, as I have said, continually alternate with each other as the objects of his arguments, and sometimes become perplexed together, though incapable of blending into any real coalition. The objections urged are: *First*, To literature considered as a means of livelihood; as any part of the resources which a man should allow himself to rely on for his current income, or worldly credit and respectability. Here the evils anticipated by Mr. Coleridge are of a high and positive character, and such as tend directly to degrade the character, and indirectly to aggravate some heavy domestic evils. *Second*, To literature considered as the means of sufficiently occupying the intellect. Here the evil apprehended is an evil of defect; it is alleged that literature is not adequate to the main end of giving due and regular excitement to the mind and the spirits, unless combined with some other summons to mental exercise of periodical recurrence—determined by an overruling cause, acting from without—and not dependent therefore on the accidents of individual will, or the caprices of momentary feeling springing out of temper or bodily health. Upon the last objection, as by far the most important in any case, and the only one at all applicable to yours, I would wish to say a word; because my thoughts on that matter are from the abundance of my heart, and drawn up from the very depths of my own experience. If there has ever lived a man who might claim the privilege of speaking with emphasis and authority on this great question,—By what means shall a man best support the

activity of his own mind in solitude?—I probably am that man; and upon this ground, that I have passed more of my life in absolute and unmitigated solitude, voluntarily, and for intellectual purposes, than any person of my age whom I have ever either met with, heard of, or read of. With such pretensions, what is it that I offer as the result of my experience, and how far does it coincide with the doctrine of Mr. Coleridge? Briefly this: I wholly agree with him that literature, in the proper acceptation of the term, as denoting what is otherwise called *Belles Lettres*, &c.—that is, the most eminent of the fine arts, and so understood, therefore, as to exclude *all science* whatsoever—is not, to use a Greek word, *αὐταρκης*,—not self-sufficing; no, not even when the mind is so far advanced that it can bring what have hitherto passed for merely literary or *æsthetic* questions under the light of philosophic principles; when problems of "taste" have expanded to problems of human nature. And why? Simply for this reason, that our power to exercise the faculties on such subjects is not, as it is on others, in defiance of our own spirits; the difficulties and resistances to our progress in these investigations are not susceptible of minute and equable partition (as in mathematics); and, therefore, the movements of the mind cannot be continuous, but are either of necessity tumultuary and *per saltum*, or none at all. When, on the contrary, the difficulty is pretty equally dispersed and broken up into a series of steps, no one of which demands any exertion sensibly more intense than the rest, nothing is required of the student beyond that sort of application and coherent attention which, in a sincere student of any standing, may be presumed as a habit already and inveterately established. The dilemma, therefore, to which a student of pure literature is continually reduced—such a student, suppose, as the

Schlegels, or any other man who has cultivated no acquaintance with the severer sciences—is this: either he studies literature as a mere man of taste, and perhaps also as a philologer—and in that case his understanding must find a daily want of some masculine exercise to call it out and give it play—or (which is the rarest thing in the world) having begun to study literature as a philosopher, he seeks to renew that elevated walk of study at all opportunities; but this is often as hopeless an effort as to a great poet it would be to sit down upon any predetermination to compose in his character of poet. Hence, therefore, if (as too often it happens) he has not cultivated those studies (mathematics, *e.g.*) which present such difficulties as will bend to a resolute effort of the mind, and which have the additional recommendation that they are apt to stimulate and irritate the mind to make that effort, he is often thrown by the very cravings of an unsatisfied intellect, and not by passion or inclination, upon some vulgar excitement of business or pleasure, which becomes constantly more necessary to him.

I should do injustice to myself if I were to say that I owed this view of the case solely to my own experience; the truth is, I easily foresaw, upon the suggestion almost of an instant, that literature would not suffice for my mind with my purposes. I foresaw this, and I provided for it from the very first; but how? *Not* in the way recommended by Mr. Coleridge, but according to a plan which you will collect from the letters I am to write, and which, therefore, I need not here anticipate. What, however, you will say (for *that* is the main inquiry), what has been the success? Has it warranted me to look back upon my past life, and to pronounce it upon the whole a happy one? I answer in calmness, and with sincerity of heart, Yes. To you, with your knowledge of life, I need not say that it is

a vain thing for any man to hope that he can arrive at my age without many troubles; every man has his own, and more especially he who has not insulated himself in this world, but has formed attachments and connexions, and has thus multiplied the avenues through which his peace is assailable. But, setting aside these inevitable deductions, I assure you that the great account of my days, if summed up, would present a great overbalance of happiness; and of happiness during those years which I lived in solitude, of necessity derived exclusively from intellectual sources. Such an evil, indeed, as time hanging heavy on my hands, I never experienced for a moment. On the other hand, to illustrate the benefits of my plan by a picture of the very opposite plan, though pursued under the most splendid advantages, I would direct your eyes to the case of an eminent living Englishman, with talents of the first order, and yet, upon the evidence of all his works, ill-satisfied at any time either with himself or those of his own age. This Englishman set out in life, as I conjecture, with a plan of study modelled upon that of Leibnitz; that is to say, he designed to make himself (as Leibnitz most truly was) a *Polyhistor*, or Catholic student. For this reason, and because at a very early age I had become familiar with the writings of Leibnitz, I have been often tempted to draw a parallel between that eminent German and the no less eminent Englishman of whom I speak. In many things they agreed; these I shall notice at some other opportunity; only in general I will say, that, as both had minds not merely powerful, but distinguished for variety and compass of power, so in both were these fine endowments completed and accomplished for works of Herculean endurance and continuity, by the alliance of a bodily constitution resembling that of horses. They were centaurs; heroic

intellects with brutal capacities of body. What partiality in nature! In general, a man has reason to think himself well off in the great lottery of this life if he draws the prize of a healthy stomach without a mind, or the prize of a fine intellect with a crazy stomach; but that any man should draw both is truly astonishing, and, I suppose, happens only once in a century. Thus far (as indeed much further) they agreed. The points of difference were many, and not less remarkable. Two I shall allege as pertinent to the matter before me. First, I remarked that Leibnitz, however anxious to throw out his mind upon the whole encyclopædia of human research, yet did not forget to pay the price at which only any *right* to be thus discursive can be earned. He sacrificed to the austerer muses. Knowing that God geometrizes eternally, he rightly supposed that in the universal temple Mathesis must furnish the master-key which would open most shrines. The Englishman, on the contrary, I remarked to have been too self-indulgent, and almost a voluptuary in his studies; sparing himself all toil, and thinking, apparently, to evade the necessity of artificial power by an extraordinary exertion of his own native power. Neither as a boy nor as a man had he submitted to any regular study or discipline of thought. His choice of subjects had lain too much amongst those dependent upon politics, or rather fleeting interests; and, when this had not happened, yet never amongst those which admitted of *continuous* thinking and study, and which support the spirits by perpetual influxes of pleasure, from the constant sense of success and difficulty overcome. As to the use of books, the German had been a discursive reader,—the Englishman a desultory reader.

Secondly, I remarked that Leibnitz was always cheerful and obliging, most courteous and communicative to his

fellow-labourers in literature or science; with a single exception (which rests, I think, as the sole stain upon his memory), just, and even generously just, to the claims of others; uncensorious, and yet patient of censure; willing to teach, and most willing to be taught. Our English contemporary was not, I think, naturally less amiable than Leibnitz; and therefore I ascribe it to his unfortunate plan of study—leaving him, of necessity, too often with no subjects for intellectual exertion but such as cannot be pursued successfully, unless in a state of genial spirits—that we find him continually in ill-humour, distempered and untuned with uncharitable feelings; directing too harsh and acrimonious a spirit of criticism always against the age in which he lives, sometimes even against individuals; querulous* under criticism, almost to the extent of believing himself the object of conspiracies and organized persecution; finally (which to me is far the gloomiest part of the picture), he neither will consent to believe that any man of his own

* That this appears on the very face of his writings, may be inferred from a German work, published about two years ago, by a Hamburg barrister (I think)—Mr. Jacobs. The subject of the book is, the Modern Literature of England, with the lives, etc., of the most popular authors. It is made up in a great measure from English literary journals, but not always; and in the particular case of the author now alluded to, Mr. Jacobs imputes to him not merely too lively a sensitiveness to censure, but absolutely a "*wasserscheue*" (hydrophobia) with regard to reviewers and critics. How Mr. Jacobs came to use so strong an expression, or this particular expression, I cannot guess; unless it were that he had happened to see (which, however, does not appear) in a work of this eloquent Englishman the following picturesque sentence: "By an unconscionable extension of the old adage, '*Noscitur a socio*,' my friends are never under the waterfall of criticism, but I must be wet through with the spray." *Spray*, indeed! I wish some of us knew no more of these angry cataracts than their spray.

age (at least of his own country) can teach *him* anything,—professing all his obligations to those *who are dead*, or else to some rusty old German; nor, finally, will he consent to teach others, with the simple-minded magnanimity of a scholar, who should not seek to mystify and perplex his pupil, or to illuminate only with half-lights, nor put himself on his guard against his reader, as against a person seeking to grow as knowing as himself. On the contrary, who should rejoice to believe—if he could believe it—that all the world knew as much as himself; and should adopt as his motto (which I make it my pride to have done from my earliest days) the simple grandeur of that line in Chaucer's description of *his* scholar:

"That gladly would he learn and gladly teach."

Such were the two features of difference which I had occasion perpetually to remark between two great scholars, in many other features so closely resembling each other. In general these two features would be thought to exist independently; but, with my previous theory of the necessity, in all cases, that, with studies of so uncertain and even morbid an effect upon the spirits as literature, should be combined some analytic exercise of *inevitable* healthy action, in this respect it was natural that *I* should connect them in my mind as cause and effect; and, in that view, they gave a double attestation to Mr. Coleridge's advice where it agrees with mine, and to mine where it differs from his.

Thus far I have considered Mr. Coleridge's advice simply as it respects the student. But the object of his studies is also entitled to some consideration. If it were better for the literary body that all should pursue a profession as their ἔργον (or business), and literature as a παρεργον (an

accessary, or mere by-business), how far is literature itself likely to benefit by such an arrangement? Mr. Coleridge insists upon it that it will; and at page 225 he alleges seven names, to which at page 233 he adds an eighth, of celebrated men, who have "shown the possibility of combining weighty performances in literature with full and independent employment." On various grounds it would be easy, I think, to cut down the list, as a list any way favourable for Mr. Coleridge's purpose, to one name, viz., that of Lord Bacon. But, waiving his examples, let us consider his arguments. The main business, the ἔργον, after exhausting a man's powers during the day, is supposed to leave three hours at night for the παρέργον. Now, we are to consider that our bright ideal of a literatus may chance to be married,—in fact, Mr. Coleridge agrees to allow him a wife. Let us suppose a wife, therefore; and the more so, because else he will perhaps take one without our permission. I ask, then, what portion of these three hours is our student to give up to the pleasure of his wife's society? For, if a man finds pleasure in his wife's company at any time, I take it for granted that he would wish to spend the evening with her. Well, if you think so (says Mr. Coleridge, in effect, who had at first supposed the learned man to "retire into his study"), in fact he need *not* retire. How then? Why, he is to study, not in his study, but in his drawing-room, whilst "the social silence, or undisturbing voices of a wife or sister, will be like a restorative atmosphere." Silence, by the way, is a strange mode of social pleasure. I know not what Mr. Coleridge does when he sits with a young woman; for my part, I do "mon possible" to entertain her, both with my wit and my wisdom; and am happy to hear *her* talk, even though she should chance to be my own wife; and never think of

tolerating silence for one instant. But, not to quarrel about tastes, what is this "sister" that so pleasantly intrudes herself into the party? The wife, I understand; but, in the north of England, or any place where I have lived, wives do not commonly present men with sisters, but with children. Suppose, then, our student's wife should give him a son; or, what is noisier, a daughter; or, what is noisier than either, both? What's to be done then? Here's a worshipful audience for a philosopher!—here's a promising company for "undisturbing voices," and "social silence!" I admire Mr. Coleridge's way of blinking this question, of masking this youthful battery with "a sister." Children, however, are incidents that do and will occur in this life, and must not be blinked. I have seen the case again and again; and I say it, and say it with pain, that there is no more respect for philosophy amongst that lively part of society than Mr. Coleridge and I have for French philosophy. They may, however, be banished to their nursery. True; but if they are ever admitted to the drawing-room, in houses where not so much company is kept, I observe that this visit is most interesting to all parties in the evening; and if they would otherwise be admitted, no good-natured student would wish to have their expulsion charged upon his books. After all, however, it is clear that Mr. Coleridge's voice is for the "retiring" system; and he gives us pretty plainly to understand (p. 230) that it is far better for men to be separated from their wives throughout the day. But, in saying this, he forgets that, in the case under consideration, the question is not so properly whether they are ever to be separated, as whether they are ever to meet. Indeed, taking what Mr. Coleridge says on the subject as addressed to literary men especially, I know not why they should

be supposed likely to make unhappy marriages more than other men. They are not called upon to pass more of their time with their wives than country gentlemen, or men generally without a profession. On the other hand, if we are to understand the words of Mr. Coleridge as of universal application, I hope that he gives us a very unfair view of the average tenor of life in this important particular. Yet, if it be settled that men will quarrel, and must quarrel with their wives, or their wives with them, unless separated, would not a large screen meet the emergency? Or, might not the learned man, as soon as breakfast is ended, bow to his wife and withdraw to his library, where he might study or be sulky according to his taste, leaving her for the rest of the day to amuse or to employ herself in the way most agreeable to her sex, rank, and previous education? But, in whatever way this difficulty may be disposed of, one point is clear to my judgment: that literature must decay unless we have a class *wholly* dedicated to that service,—not pursuing it as an amusement only, with wearied and pre-occupied minds. The reproach of being a "*nation boutiquière*," now so eminently inapplicable to the English, would become indeed just, and in the most unfortunate sense just, if, from all our overstocked trades and professions, we could not spare men enough to compose a garrison on permanent duty for the service of the highest purposes which grace and dignify our nature.

You will not infer from all this any abatement in my old respect for Mr. Coleridge's great and various powers; no man admires them more. But there is no treason, I hope, in starting a little game now and then from the thickets of *The Friend*, the *Biographia Literaria*, or even from Mr. Coleridge's *Sermons*, considering that they are *Lay* ones. Young men must have some exercise this frosty

weather. Hereafter I shall have occasion to break a lance with Mr. Coleridge on more difficult questions; and very happy I shall be if the amusement which I shall make it my business to strike out, by my hammering, from the flinty rock of his metaphysics, should either tempt any one to look into his valuable writings, or should tempt Mr. Coleridge to sally out of his hiding-place into a philosophic passion, and to attack me with the same freedom. Such an exhibition must be amusing to the public. I conceive that two transcendentalists, who are also two ——s, can hardly ever before have stripped in any ring. But, by the way, I wish he would leave transcendentalism to me and other young men; for, to say the truth, it does not prosper in his hands. *I* will take charge of the public principles in that point, and he will thus be more at leisure to give us another *Ancient Mariner*, which, I will answer for it, the whole literary body would receive with gratitude and a fervent "plaudite."

LETTER II.

OUTLINE OF THE WORK—NOTICE OF FORMER WRITERS ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

My dear M.—In this my second and last letter of preface, I shall settle the idea and the arrangement of my papers. There will be in all about seven, of which four will exhibit the material on which the student is to work; the other three, the tools with which the workmanship is to be conducted. First, *what* is to be done, and, secondly, *how* is the natural

and obvious distribution of the work; that is to say, the business is to assign, first, the end, and, secondly, the means. And, because the end should reasonably determine the means, it would seem natural that, in the arrangement of the work, all which relates to *that* should have precedency. Nevertheless, I mean to invert this order, and for the following reason: All that part of the means, which are so entirely determined by the end as to presuppose its full and circumstantial development, may be concluded specially restricted to that individual end. In proportion to this restriction they will, therefore, be of narrow application, and are best treated in direct connexion, and concurrently with the object to which they are thus appropriated. On the other hand, those means or instruments of thought, which are sufficiently complex and important to claim a separate attention to themselves, are usually of such large and extensive use that they belong indifferently to all schemes of study, and may safely be premised in any plan, however novel in its principles or peculiar in its tendencies. What are these general instruments of study? According to my view they are three, —first, Logic; secondly, Languages; thirdly, Arts of Memory. With respect to these, it is not necessary that any special end should be previously given. Be his end what it may, every student must have thoughts to arrange, knowledge to transplant, and facts to record. Means which are thus universally requisite may safely have precedency of the end; and it will not be a preposterous order if I dedicate my first three letters to the several subjects of Logic, Languages, and Arts of Memory, which will compose one half of my scheme, leaving to the other half the task of unfolding the course of study for which these instruments will be available. Having thus settled

the arrangement, and implicitly, therefore, settled in part the idea or *ratio* of my scheme, I shall go on to add what may be necessary to confine your expectations to the right track, and prevent them from going above or below the true character of the mark I aim at. I profess, then, to attempt something much higher than merely directions for a course of reading. Not that such a work might not be of eminent service; and in particular at this time, and with a constant adaptation to the case of rich men, not literary, I am of opinion that no more useful book could be executed than a series of letters (addressed, for example, to country gentlemen, merchants, &c.) on the formation of a library. The uses of such a treatise, however, are not those which I contemplate; for, either it would presume and refer to a plan of study already settled—and in that light it is a mere complement of the plan I propose to execute—or else it would attempt to *involve* a plan of study in the course of reading suggested; and *that* would be neither more nor less than to do *in concreto*, what it is far more convenient, as well as more philosophical, to do (as I am now going to do) directly and *in abstracto*. A mere course of reading, therefore, is much below what I propose; on the other hand, an organon of the human understanding is as much above it. Such a work is a labour for a life; that is to say, though it may take up but a small part of every day, yet could it in no other way accumulate its materials than by keeping the mind everlastingly on the watch to seize upon such notices as may arise daily throughout a life under the favour of accident or occasion. Forty years are not too large a period for such a work; and my present work, however maturely meditated must be executed with rapidity. Here, in fact, I do but sketch or trace in outline (ὡς ἐν τυπῳ περιλαβειν) what there it would become my duty to

develop, to fill up in detail, to apply, and to illustrate on the most extensive scale.

After having attempted in my first part to put you in possession of the best method for acquiring the *instruments* of study; and, with respect to logic in particular, having directed a philosophic light upon its true meaning and purpose, with the hope of extinguishing that anarchy of errors which have possessed this ground from the time of Lord Bacon to the moment at which I write,—I then, in the second division, address myself to the question of *ends*. Upon which word let me distinguish: upon ends, in an absolute sense, as ultimate ends, it is presumption in any man to offer counsel to another of mature age. Advice of that sort, given under whatever hollow pretences of kindness, is to be looked upon as arrogance in the most repulsive shape; and to be rejected with that sort of summary disdain, which any man not of servile nature would testify towards him who should attempt to influence his choice of a wife. A student of mature age must be presumed to be best acquainted with his own talents and his own intellectual infirmities, with his "forte" and his "foible," with his own former experience of failure or success, and with the direction in which his inclinations point. Far be it from me to violate by the spirit of my counsels a pride so reasonable, which, in truth, I hold sacred. My scheme takes an humbler ground. *Ends*, indeed, in a secondary sense, the latter half professes to deal with; but such ends as, though bearing that character in relation to what is purely and merely instrumental, yet again become *means* in relation to ends absolutely so called. The *final* application of your powers and knowledge it is for yourself only to determine; my pretensions in regard to that election are limited to this,—that I profess to place you on a vantage ground

from which you may determine more wisely, by determining from a higher point of survey. My purpose is not to map the whole course of your journey, but to serve as your guide to that station at which you may be able to lay down your future route for yourself. The former half of my work I have already described to you; the latter half endeavours to construct such a system of study as shall combine these two advantages: 1. Systematic unity; that is, such a principle of *internal* connexion, as that the several parts of the plan shall furnish assistance interchangeably. 2. The largest possible compass of *external* relations. Some empires, you know, are built for growth; others are essentially improgressive, but are built for duration, on some principle of strong internal cohesion. Systems of knowledge, however, and schemes of study, should propose both ends: they should take their foundations broad and deep,

"And lay great bases for eternity,"

which is the surest key to internal and systematic connection; and, secondly, they should provide for future growth and accretion, regarding all knowledge as a nucleus and centre of accumulation for other knowledge. It is on this latter principle, by the way, that the system of education in our public schools, however otherwise defective, is justly held superior to the specious novelties of our suburban academies; for it is more radical, and adapted to a larger superstructure. Such, I say, is the character of my scheme; and, by the very act of claiming for it, as one of its benefits, that it leaves you in the *centre* of large and comprehensive relations to other parts of knowledge, it is pretty apparent that I do not presume to suggest in what direction of these manifold relations you should afterwards advance; *that*, as I have now sufficiently explained, will be left to your own self-knowledge; but to your self-knowledge illu-

mined at the point where I leave you by that other knowledge which my scheme of study professes to communicate.

From this general outline of my own plan, I am led by an easy transition to a question of yours, respecting the merits of the most celebrated amongst those who have trod the same ground in past times. Excepting only a little treatise of Erasmus, *De Ratione Studii*, all the essays on this subject by eminent continental writers appeared in the seventeenth century; and, of these, a large majority before the year 1640. They were universally written in Latin; and, the Latin of that age being good, they are so far agreeable to read; beyond this, and the praise of elegance in their composition and arrangement, I have not much to say in their behalf. About the year 1645, Lewis Elzevir published a *corpus* of these essays, amounting in all to four-and-twenty. In point of elegance and good sense, their merits are various; thus far they differ; but, in regard to the main point, they hold a lamentable equality of pretension —being all thoroughly hollow and barren of any practical use.* I cannot give you a better notion of their true place

* Not for the sake of any exception in its favour from the general censure here pronounced on this body of essays, but for its extraordinary tone of passion and frantic energy, and at times of noble sentiment eloquently expressed, I must notice, as by far the most memorable of these essays of the seventeenth century, that of Joachim Forz Ringelberg, *On the Method of Study* (De Ratione Studii). It is one of those books which have been written most evidently not merely by a madman (as many thousands have), but by a madman under a high paroxysm of his malady; and, omitting a few instances of affectation and puerility, it is highly affecting. It appears that the author, though not thirty years of age at the date of his book, was afflicted with the gravel—according to his belief, incurably; and much of the book was actually written in darkness (on waxen tablets, or on wooden tablets, with a *stylus* formed of charred bones), during the sleepless nights of pain consequent upon his disease.

and relation to the class of works of which you are in search of, than by an analogy drawn from the idea of didactic poetry, as it exists in the Roman literature and our own. So thoroughly is this sometimes misunderstood, that I have seen it insisted on as a merit in a didactic poem, that the art which it professed to deliver might be learned and practised in all its technicalities, without other assistance than that which the poem supplied. But, had this been true, so far from being a praise, it would instantly have degraded the poem from its rank as a work among the products of Fine Arts; *ipso facto*, such a poem would have settled down from that high intellectual rank into the ignoble pretensions of mechanic art, in which the metre, and the style which metre introduces, would immediately have lost their justification. The true idea of didactic poetry is this: either the poet selects an art which furnishes the *occasion* for a series of picturesque exhibitions (as Virgil, Dyer, &c.); and, in that case, it is true that he derives part of his power from the art which he delivers; not, however, from what is essential to the art, but from its accidents and adjuncts. Either he does this, or else (as

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"Ætas abiit," says he, "reditura nunquam—Ah! nunquam reditura! Tametsi annum nunc solum trigesimum ago, spem tamen ademit calculi morbus." And again: "Sic interim meditantem calculi premunt, ut gravi ipsa dolore mœreat mens, et plerumque noctes abducat insomnes angor." Towards the end it is that he states the remarkable circumstances under which the book was composed. "Bonam partem libri hujus in tenebris scripsi, quando somnus me ob calculi dolorem reliquerat; idque quum sol adversa nobis figeret vestigia, nocte vagante in medio cœlo. Deerat lumen; verum tabulas habeo, quibus etiam in tenebris utor." It is singular that so interesting a book should nowhere have been noticed to my knowledge in English literature, except, indeed, in a slight and inaccurate way, by Dr. Vicesimus Knox, in his Winter Evening Lucubrations.

is the case with Lord Roscommon, Pope, &c.), so far from seeking in his subject for any part of the *power*, he seeks in *that* only for the *resistance* with which he contends by means of the power derived from the verse and the artifices of style. To one case or other of this alternative all didactic poems are reducible; and, allowing for the differences of rhetoric and poetry, the same ideal must have presided in the composition of the various essays of the seventeenth century, addressed to students; the subject was felt to be austere and unattractive, and almost purely scholastic; it was the ambition of the writers, therefore, to show that they could present it in a graceful shape; and that under their treatment the subject might become interesting to the reader, as an arena, upon which skill was exhibited, baffling or evading difficulties, even at the price of all benefit to the anxious and earnest disciple. *Spartam nactus es*, was their motto, *hanc exorna;* and, like Cicero, in his Idea of an Orator, with relation to the practical duties; or Lord Shaftesbury, with relation to the accurate knowledge of the academic philosophy; they must be supposed deliberately to have made a *selection* from the arts or doctrines before them, for the sake of a beautiful composition which should preserve all its parts in harmony, and only secondarily (if at all) to have regarded the interests of the student. By all of them the invitation held out was not so much *Indocti discant*, as *Ament meminisse periti.*

In our own country there have been numerous "letters," &c., on this interesting subject; but not one that has laid any hold on the public mind, except the two works of Dr. Watts, especially that upon the "Improvement of the Mind." Being the most imbecile of books, it must have owed its success—1. To the sectarian zeal of his party in religion,—his fellows and his followers; 2. To the fact of

its having gained for its author, from two Scotch universities, the highest degree they could bestow; 3. To the distinguished honour of having been adopted as a lecture-book (q. as an examination-book?) by both English universities; 4. To the extravagant praise of Dr. Johnson, amongst whose infirmities it was to praise warmly when he was flattered by the sense of his own great superiority in powers and knowledge. Dr. Johnson supposes it to have been modelled on Locke's Conduct of the Understanding; but surely this is as ludicrous as to charge upon Silence any elaborate imitation of Mr. Justice Shallow. That Silence may have borrowed from another man half of a joke, or echoed the roar of his laughter, is possible; but of any more grave or laborious attempts to rob he stands ludicrously acquitted by the exemplary imbecility of his nature. No; Dr. Watts did *not* steal from Mr. Locke; in matters of dulness a man is easily original; and I suppose that even Feeble or Shallow might have had credit for the effort necessary to the following counsels, taken at random from Dr. Watts, at the page where the book has happened to fall open.

1. Get a distinct and comprehensive knowledge of the subject which you treat of; survey it on all sides, and make yourself perfect master of it; then (then! what then? —Think of Feeble making an inference. Well, "then") you will have all the sentiments that relate to it in your view; 2. Be well skilled in the language which you speak; 3. Acquire a variety of words, a *copia verborum*. Let your memory be rich in synonymous terms, p. 228, edit. 1817.

Well done, most magnanimous Feeble! Such counsels I suppose that any man might have produced, and you will not wish to see criticised. Let me rather inquire, what common defect it is which has made the works of much

more ingenious men, and in particular that of Locke, utterly useless for the end proposed. The error in these books is the same which occurs in books of ethics, and which has made them more or less useless for any practical purpose. As it is important to put an end to all delusion in matters of such grave and general concern as the improvement of our understandings, or the moral valuation of actions, and as I repeat that the delusion here alluded to has affected both equally (so far as they can be affected by the books written professedly to assist them), it may be worth while to spend a few lines in exposing it. I believe that you are so far acquainted with the structure of a syllogism as to know how to distinguish between the major and minor proposition; there is, indeed, a technical rule which makes it impossible to err; but you will have no need of *that*, if you once apprehend the *rationale* of a syllogism in the light under which I will here place it. In every syllogism one of the two premises (the major) lays down a rule, under which rule the other (the minor) brings the subject of your argument as a particular case. The minor is, therefore, distinguished from the major by an act of the *judgment, namely*, a subsumption of a special case under a rule. Now consider how this applies to morals: here the conscience supplies the general rule, or major proposition, and about this there is no question; but, to bring the special case of conduct, which is the subject of your inquiry, under this general rule; here first commences the difficulty, and just upon this point are ethical treatises for the most part silent. Accordingly, no man thinks of consulting them for his direction under any moral perplexities; if he reads them at all, it is for the gratification of his understanding in surveying the order and relation amongst the several members of a system; never for the information of his moral judgment.

For any practical use in that way, a *casuistry*, that is, a subsumption of the *cases* most frequently recurring in ordinary life, should be combined with the system of moral principles*—the latter supplying the major (or normal) proposition; the former supplying the minor proposition, which brings the special case under the rule. With the help of this explanation, you will easily understand on what principle I venture to denounce, as unprofitable, the whole class of books written on the model of Locke's *Conduct of the Understanding*. According to Locke, the student is not to hurry, but again not to loiter; not to be too precipitate, nor yet too hesitating; not to be too confiding, but far less too suspicious; not too obstinate in his own opinions, yet again (for the love of God!) not too resigned to those of others; not too general in his divisions, but (as he regards his own soul) not too minute, &c. &c.

But surely no man, bent on the improvement of his

* Accordingly, our fashionable moral practitioner for this generation, Dr. Paley, who prescribes for the consciences of both universities, and, indeed, of most respectable householders, has introduced a good deal of casuistry into his work, though not under that name. In England there is an aversion to the mere name, founded partly on this, that casuistry has been most cultivated by Roman Catholic divines, and too much with a view to an indulgent and dispensing morality; and partly on the excessive subdivision and hair-splitting of cases; which tends to the infinite injury of morals, by perplexing and tampering with the conscience, and by presuming morality to be above the powers of any but the subtlest minds. All this, however, is but the abuse of casuistry; and without casuistry of some sort or other, no practical decision could be made in the accidents of daily life. Of this, on a fitter occasion, I could give a cumulative proof. Meantime let it suffice to observe that law, which is the most practical of all things, is a perpetual casuistry; in which an immemorial usage, a former decision of the court, or positive statute, furnishes the major proposition; and the judgment of the jury, enlightened by the knowledge of the bench, furnishes the minor or casuistical proposition.

faculties, was ever guilty of these errors under these names, that is, knowingly and deliberately. If he is so at all, it is either that he has not reflected on his own method, or that, having done so, he has allowed himself in the act or habit offending these rules on a false view of its tendency and character; because, in fact, having adopted as his rule (or major) that very golden mean which Mr. Locke recommends, and which, without Mr. Locke's suggestion, he would have adopted for himself, it has yet been possible for him, by an erroneous judgment, to take up an act or habit under the rule, which with better advice he would have excluded; which advice is exactly what Mr. Locke has—*not* given. Over and above all this, the method of the book is aphoristic; and, as might be expected from that method, without a plan; and which is partly the cause and partly the consequence of having a plan without foundation.

This word *foundation* leads me to one remark suggested by your letter; and with that I shall conclude my own. When I spoke above of the student's taking his foundations broad and deep, I had my eye chiefly on the corner-stones of strong-built knowledge, namely, on logic; on a proper choice of languages; on a particular part of what is called metaphysics; and on mathematics. Now you allege (I suppose upon occasion of my references to mathematics in my last letter) that you have no "genius" for mathematics; and you speak with the usual awe (*pavor attonitorum*) of the supposed "profundity" of intellect necessary to a great progress in this direction. Be assured that you are in utter error, though it be an error all but universal. In mathematics, upon two irresistible arguments which I shall set in a clear light, when I come to explain the procedure of the mind with regard to that sort of evidence, and that sort

of investigation, there can be no subtlety; all minds are levelled except as to the rapidity of the course, and, from the entire absence of all those acts of mind which do really imply profundity of intellect, it is a question whether an idiot might not be made an excellent mathematician. Listen not to the romantic notions of the world on this subject; above all, listen not to mathematicians. Mathematicians, as *mathematicians*, have no business with the question. It is one thing to understand mathematics; another, and far different, to understand the philosophy of mathematics. With respect to this, it is memorable, that in no one of the great philosophical questions which the ascent of mathematics has from time to time brought up above the horizon of our speculative view, has any mathematician who was merely such (however eminent) had depth of intellect adequate to its solution, without insisting on the absurdities published by mathematicians, on the philosophy of the *infinite*, since that notion was introduced into mathematics, or on the fruitless attempts of all but a metaphysician to settle the strife between the conflicting modes of valuing *living forces*;—I need only ask what English or French mathematician has been able to exhibit the notion of *negative quantities*, in a theory endurable even to a popular philosophy, or which has commanded any assent? Or again, what Algebra is there existing which does not contain a false and ludicrous account of the procedure in that science, as contrasted with the procedure in geometry? But, not to trouble you with more of these cases so opprobrious to mathematicians, lay this to heart, that mathematics are very easy and very important; they are, in fact, the organ of one large division of human knowledge. And, as it is of consequence that you should lose no time by waiting for my letter on that subject, let me forestall so much of it, as to

advise that you would immediately commence with Euclid; reading those eight books of the Elements which are usually read, and the Data. If you should go no further, so much geometry will be useful and delightful; and so much, by reading for two hours a day, you will easily accomplish in about thirteen weeks, that is, one quarter of a year.

LETTER III.

MY DEAR SIR,—IN my three following letters I am to consider, 1st, Languages; 2d, Logic; Arts of Memory; not as parts of knowledge sought or valued on their own account, but simply as the most general amongst the means and instruments of the student, estimated therefore with a reference to the number and importance of the *ends* which they further, and fairly to be presumed in all schemes of self-improvement liberally planned. In this letter I will speak of languages; my thoughts, and a twenty years' experience as a student, having furnished me with some hints that may be useful in determining your choice, where choice is at first sight so difficult, and the evils of an erroneous choice so great. On this Babel of an earth which you and I inhabit, there are said to be about three thousand languages and jargons. Of nearly five hundred you will find a specimen in the Mithridates of Adelung, and in some other German works of more moderate bulk.*

* Especially one, whose title I forget, by Vater, the editor and completer of the *Mithridates*, after Adelung's death. By the way, for the sake of the merely English reader, it may be well to mention that the *Mithridates* is so called with an allusion to the great king of

The final purposes of this vast engine for separating nations it is not difficult in part to perceive; and it is presumable that those purposes have been nearly fulfilled; since there can be little doubt that within the next two centuries all the barbarous languages of the earth (that is, those without a literature) will be one after one strangled and exterminated by four European languages, namely, the English, the Spanish, the Portuguese, and the Russian. Central Africa, and *that* only, can resist the momentum of civilisation for a longer period. Now, languages are sometimes studied, not as a key to so many bodies of literature, but as an object *per se*, for example, by Sir William Jones, Dr. Leyden, &c.; and where the researches are conducted with the enthusiasm and the sagacity of the late extraordinary Professor of Oriental Languages in Edinburgh, Dr. Alexander Murray, it is impossible to withhold one's admiration; *he* had a theory, and distinct purposes, which shed light upon his paths that are else "as dark as Erebus." Such labours conducted in such a spirit must be important, if the eldest records of the human race be important; for the affinities of language furnish the main clue for ascending, through the labyrinths of nations, to their earliest origins and connexions. To a professed linguist, therefore, the natural advice would be—examine the structure of as many languages as possible; gather as many thousand specimens as possible into your *hortus siccus*, beginning with the eldest forms of the Teutonic, namely, the Visigothic and the Icelandic, for which the aids rendered by modern

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that name contemporary with Sylla, Lucullus, &c., of whom the tradition was that, in an immense and polyglot army, composed from a great variety of nations, he could talk to every soldier in his own language.

learning are immense. To a professed philologist, I say, the natural advice would be this. But to you, who have no such purposes, and whom I suppose to wish for languages simply as avenues to literature not otherwise accessible, I will frankly say, start from this principle—that the act of learning a language is in itself an evil; and so frame your selection of languages, that the largest possible body of literature *available for your purposes* shall be laid open to you at the least possible price of time and mental energy squandered in this direction. I say this with some earnestness. For I will not conceal from you, that one of the habits most unfavourable to the growth and sincere culture of the intellect in our day, is the facility with which men surrender themselves to the barren and ungenial labour of language-learning. Unless balanced by studies that give more exercise, more excitement, and more aliment to the faculties, I am convinced, by all I have observed, that this practice is the dry rot of the human mind. How should it be otherwise? The act of learning a science is good, not only for the knowledge which results, but for the exercise which attends it; the energies which the learner is obliged to put forth are true intellectual energies, and his very errors are full of instruction. He fails to construct some leading idea, or he even misconstructs it; he places himself in a false position with respect to certain propositions; views them from a false centre; makes a false or an imperfect antithesis; apprehends a definition with insufficient rigour; or fails in his use of it to keep it self-consistent. These and a thousand other errors are met by a thousand appropriate resources—all of a true intellectual character; comparing, combining, distinguishing, generalizing, subdividing, acts of abstraction and evolution, of synthesis and analysis, until the most torpid minds are

ventilated, and healthily excited by this introversion of the faculties upon themselves.

But, in the study of language (with an exception, however, to a certain extent, in favour of Latin and Greek, which I shall notice hereafter), nothing of all this can take place, and for one simple reason—that all is arbitrary. Wherever there is a law and system, wherever there is relation and correspondence of parts, the intellect will make its way—will interfuse amongst the dry bones the blood and pulses of life, and create "a soul under the ribs of death." But whatsoever is arbitrary and conventional—which yields no reason why it should be this way rather than that, obeying no theory or law—must, by its lifeless forms, kill and mortify the action of the intellect. If this be true, it becomes every student to keep watch upon himself, that he does not, upon any light temptation, allow himself an overbalance of study in this direction; for the temptations to such an excess, which in our days are more powerful than formerly, are at all times too powerful. Of all the weapons in the armoury of the scholar, none is so showy or so captivating to commonplace minds as skill in languages. *Vanity* is, therefore, one cause of the undue application to languages. A second is the national *fashion*. What nation but ourselves ever made the language of its eternal enemy an essential part of even a decent education?* What should we think of Roman policy, if, during the Second Punic War, the Carthaginian language had been taught as

* See the advertisements of the humblest schools; in which, however low the price of tuition, &c., is fixed, French never fails to enter as a principal branch of the course of study. To which fact I may add, that even twelve or fifteen years ago I have seen French circulating libraries in London chiefly supported by people in a humble rank.

a matter of course to the children of every Roman citizen? But a third cause, which I believe has more efficacy than either of the former, is mere *levity*—the simple fact of being unballasted by any sufficient weight of plan or settled purpose to present a counterpoise to the slightest momentum this way or that, arising from any impulse of accident or personal caprice. When there is no resistance, a breath of air will be sufficient to determine the motion. I remember once that, happening to spend an autumn in Ilfracombe, on the west coast of Devonshire, I found all the young ladies whom I knew busily employed on the study of marine botany. On the opposite shore of the channel, in all the South Welsh ports of Tenby, &c., they were no less busy upon conchology. In neither case from any previous love of the science, but simply availing themselves of their local advantages. Now, here a man must have been truly ill-natured to laugh; for the studies were in both instances beautiful. A love for it was created, if it had not pre-existed; and, to women and young women, the very absence of all austere unity of purpose and self-determination was becoming and graceful. Yet, when this same levity and liability to casual impulses come forward in the acts and purposes of a man, I must own that I have often been unable to check myself in something like a contemptuous feeling; nor should I wish to check myself, but for remembering how many men of energetic minds constantly give way to slight and inadequate motives, simply for want of being summoned to any anxious reviews of their own conduct. How many cases have I known where a particular study—as, suppose, of the Hartleian philosophy—was pursued throughout a whole college simply because a man of talents had talked of it in the junior common-room? How many where a book became popular because it had been

mentioned in the House of Commons? How many where a man resolved to learn Welsh because he was spending a month or two at Barmouth? or Italian because he had found a Milan series of the poets in his aunt's library? or the violin because he had bought a fine one at an auction?

In 1808-9 you must well remember what a strong impulse the opening of the Peninsular War communicated to our current literature. The presses of London and the provinces teemed with editions of Spanish books, dictionaries, and grammars; and the motions of the British armies were accompanied by a corresponding activity among British compositors. From the just interest which is now renewed in Spanish affairs, I suppose something of the same scene will recur. Now, for my own part, though undoubtedly I would, for the sake of Calderon alone (judging of him through a German translation), most willingly study the Spanish literature (if I had leisure), yet I should be ashamed to do so upon the irrelevant and *occasional* summons of an interesting situation in Spanish affairs. I should feel that by such an act I confessed a want of pre-occupation in my mind, a want of self-origination in my plans, an inertness of will, which, above all things, I do and ought to detest. If it were right for me (right, I mean, in relation to my previous scheme of study) to have dedicated a portion of my life to the Spanish literature, it must have been right before the Spanish politics took an interesting aspect. If it were not right, it could not become so upon a suggestion so purely verbal as the recurrence of the word Spanish in the London journals.

This, I am sure, you will interpret candidly. I am not supposing you less furnished with powers of self-determination than myself. I have no personal allusion or exception; but I suppose every man liable to be acted on unduly, or by

inadequate impulses, so long as he is not possessed by some plan that may steady that levity of nature which is implied in the mere state of indifference to all settled plans. This levity, in our days, meets with an accidental ally in the extraordinary facilities for studying languages in the shape of elementary books; which facilities of themselves form a fourth cause of the disproportionate study given to languages. But a fifth cause occurs to me, of a less selfish and indolent character than any of the preceding; and, as it seems to me hardly possible that it should not influence you more or less to make your choice of languages too large and comprehensive, I shall tell you, from my own case, what may be sufficient to set you on your guard against too much indulgence to a feeling in itself just and natural. In my youthful days, I never entered a great library, suppose of one hundred thousand volumes, but my predominant feeling was one of pain and disturbance of mind,—not much unlike that which drew tears from Xerxes, on viewing his immense army, and reflecting that in one hundred years not one soul would remain alive. To me, with respect to the books, the same effect would be brought about by my own death. Here, said I, are one hundred thousand books, the worst of them capable of giving me some pleasure and instruction; and before I can have had time to extract the honey from one-twentieth of this hive, in all likelihood I shall be summoned away. This thought, I am sure, must have often occurred to yourself; and you may judge how much it was aggravated when I found that, subtracting all merely professional books—books of reference, as dictionaries, &c. &c. &c.—from the universal library of Europe, there would still remain a total of not less than twelve hundred thousand books over and above what the presses of Europe are still disemboguing into the ocean

of literature, many of them immense folios or quartos. Now, I had been told by an eminent English author, that, with respect to one single work, namely, the History of Thuanus, a calculation had been made by a Portuguese monk, which showed that barely to read over the words (and allowing no time for reflection) would require three years' labour, at the rate of (I think) three hours a day. Further, I had myself ascertained that to read a duodecimo volume, in prose, of four hundred pages—all skipping being barred, and the rapid reading which belongs to the vulgar interest of a novel—was a very sufficient work for one day. Consequently, three hundred and sixty-five per annum—that is (with a very small allowance for the claims of life on one's own account and that of one's friends), one thousand for every triennium; that is, ten thousand for thirty years—will be as much as a man who lives for that only can hope to accomplish. From the age of twenty to eighty, therefore—if a man were so unhappy as to live to eighty—the utmost he could hope to travel through would be twenty thousand volumes,—a number not, perhaps, above *five per cent.* of what the mere *current* literature of Europe would accumulate in that period of years. Now, from this amount of twenty thousand make a deduction on account of books of larger size, books to be studied and books to be read slowly and many times over (as all works in which the composition is a principal part of their pretensions),—allow a fair discount for such deductions, and the twenty thousand will perhaps shrink to eight or five thousand. All this arithmetical statement you must not conceive to relate to any fanciful case of misery. No; I protest to you that I speak of as real a case of suffering as ever can have existed. And it soon increased; for the same panic seized upon me with respect to the works of art. I found that I

had no chance of hearing the twenty-five thousandth part of the music that had been produced. And so of other arts. Nor was this all; for, happening to say to myself, one night as I entered a long street, "I shall never see the one thousandth part of the people who are living in this single street," it occurred to me that every man and woman was a most interesting book, if one knew how to read them. Here opened upon me a new world of misery; for, if books and works of art existed by millions, men existed by hundreds of millions. Nay, even if it had been possible for me to know all of my own generation, yet, like Dr. Faustus, who desired to see "Helen of Greece," I should still have been dissatisfied; for what was one generation to all that were past? Nay, my madness took yet a higher flight; for I considered that I stood on a little isthmus of time, which connected the two great worlds, the past and the future. I stood in equal relation to both; I asked for admittance to one as much as to the other. Even if a necromancer could have brought up the great men of the seventeenth century, I should have said, "What good does all this do me? Where are those of the twentieth century?" —and so onward! In short, I never turned my thoughts this way but I fell into a downright midsummer madness. I could not enjoy what I had,—craving for that which I had not, and could not have; was thirsty, like Tantalus, in the midst of waters; even when using my present wealth, thought only of its perishableness; and "wept to have what I so feared to lose."

But all this, you will say, was, by my own admission, "madness." Madness, I grant; but such a madness! not as lunatics suffer; no hallucination of the brain; but a madness like that of misers,—the usurpation and despotism of one feeling, natural in itself, but travelling into an excess,

which at last upset all which should have balanced it. And I must assert that, with allowance for difference of degrees, no madness is more common. Many of those who give themselves up to the study of languages do so under the same disease which I have described; and, if they do not carry it on to the same extremity of wretchedness, it is because they are not so logical, and so consistent in their madness, as I was. Under our present enormous accumulation of books, I do affirm that a miserable distraction of choice (which is the germ of such a madness) must be very generally incident to the times; that the symptoms of it are, in fact, very prevalent; and that one of the chief symptoms is an enormous "gluttonism" for books, and for adding language to language; and in this way it is that literature becomes much more a source of torment than of pleasure. Nay, I will go further, and will say that, of many who escape this disease, some owe their privilege simply to the narrowness of their minds, and contracted range of their sympathies with literature, which, enlarged, they would soon lose it. Others, again, owe it to their situation; as, for instance, in a country town, where books being few, a man can use up all his materials; his appetite is unpalled, and he is grateful for the loan of a MS., &c. But bring him up to London; show him the waggon-loads of unused stores which he is at liberty to work up; tell him that these even are but a trifle, perhaps, to what he may find in the libraries of Paris, Dresden, Milan, &c., of religious houses, of English noblemen, &c.,—and this same man who came up to London blithe and happy will leave it pale and sad. You have ruined his peace of mind. A subject which he fancied himself capable of exhausting he finds to be a labour for centuries. He has no longer the healthy pleasure of feeling himself master of his materials; he is de-

graded into their slave. Perhaps I dwell too much on this subject; but allow me, before I leave it, to illustrate what I have said by the case of two eminent literati, who are at this moment exhibiting themselves as a couple of figurantes (if I may so say) on the stage of Europe, and who have sacrificed their own happiness and dignity of mind to the very madness I have been describing; or, if not, to the far more selfish passion for notoriety and ostentatious display. The men I mean are Frederick Schlegel, better known to the English public as the friend of Madame de Staël, and F. Bouterwek.

The history of the first is somewhat ludicrous. Coming upon the stage at a time when Kant possessed the national mind of Germany, he thought it would be a good speculation not to fall into the train of the philosopher, but to open a sort of chapel of dissent. He saw no reason why men should not swear by Bouterwek, as well as by Kant; and, connecting this fact with the subsequent confession of Bouterwek, that he was in reality playing off a conscious hoax, it is laughable to mention, that for a time he absolutely found some followers—who worshipped him, but suspiciously and provisionally. Unfortunately, however, as he had no leisure or ability to understand Kant, he was obliged to adopt Dr. Priestley's plan of revoking and cancelling in every successive work all his former works, as false, pestilent, and heretical. This upset him. The philosopher was unfrocked; and in that line of business he found himself bankrupt. At this crisis things looked ill. However, being young, he pleaded his tender years. George Barnwell and others had been led astray as well as himself, by keeping bad company: he had now quitted all connexion with metaphysics; and begged to inform the public that he had opened an entirely new concern for criticism in all its

branches. He kept his word; he left off hoaxing, and applied himself to a respectable line of business.

The fruits of his labours were a history, in twelve volumes, of modern literature from the end of the thirteenth century. Of this work I have examined all that I pretend to judge of, namely, the two sections relating to the German and the English literature; and, not to do him injustice, if it professed to be no more than a bibliographical record of books, it is executed with a very laudable care and fidelity. But imagine to yourself the vast compass of his plan. He professes to give the history of—1. Spanish; 2. Portuguese; 3. English; 4. German; 5. French; 6. Italian literature; no sketch, observe, or abstract of them, but a full and formal history. Conceive, if you can, the monstrous and insane pretensions involved in such a scheme. At starting he had five languages to learn, besides the dialects of his own; not only so, but five languages, each through all its varieties for the space of half a millennium: English, for instance, not merely of this day, but the English of Chaucer, of the Metrical Romances; nay, even of Robert of Gloucester, in 1280. Next, the mere printed books (to say nothing of the MSS.) in any one of these languages, to be read and meditated, as they ought to be by a *historian* of the literature, would have found full employment for twelve able-bodied men through an entire life. And after all, when the materials were ready, the work of composition would be still to begin. Such were Bouterwek's pretensions. As to Schlegel's, who, without any more genius or originality, has much more talent,—his were still more extravagant, and were pushed to an extremity that must, I should think, at times disquiet his admirers with a feeling that all is not sound. For, though he did not profess to go so much into detail as Bouterwek, still his

abstracts are represented as built on as much reading, though not directly quoted; and to all that Bouterwek held forth in his promises Schlegel added, as a little *bonus* to his subscribers, 1. Oriental literature; 2. The Scandinavian literature; 3. The Provençal literature; and, for aught I know, a billion of things besides; to say nothing of an active share in the current literature, as reviewer, magazinist, and author of all work. Now, the very history of these pretensions exposes their hollowness: to record them is to refute them. Knowing, as we all know, how many years it demands, and by what a leisurely and genial communication with their works it is that we can gain any deep intimacy with even a few great artists, such as Shakspere, Milton, or Euripides, how monstrous a fiction would that man force on our credulity, who tells us that he has read and weighed in the balances the total products of human intellect dispersed through thirty languages for a period of three thousand years; and how gross a delusion does *he* practise upon his own mind who can persuade himself that it is *reading* to cram himself with words, the bare sense of which can hardly have time to glance, like the lamps of a mail coach, upon his hurried and bewildered understanding! There is a picture at Oxford, which I saw when a boy, of an old man, with misery in his eye, in the act of copying a book; and the story attached (I forget whether with any historic foundation) is that he was under a vow to copy out some great portion of the Bible before he allowed himself (or was allowed) to eat. I dare say you know the picture; and perhaps I tell the story wrong. However, just such a man, and just so wo-begone, must this man of words appear when he is alone in his study; with a frozen heart and a famished intellect; and every now and then, perhaps exclaiming with Alcibiades, "O ye

Athenians! what a world of hardship I endure to obtain your applause!" So slightly is his knowledge worked into the texture of his mind, that I am persuaded a brain fever would sweep it all away. With this sketch of Messrs. Bouterwek and Schlegel, it is superfluous to add that their criticisms are utterly *worthless;* being all words—words—words: however, with this difference, that Bouterwek's are simply = 0, being the mere rubbishy sweepings from the works of literatuli long since defunct: but Schlegel's, agreeably to his natural haughtiness and superior talents, are bad in a positive sense—being filled with such conceits, fancies, and fictions, as you would naturally expect from a clever man talking about what he had never, in any true sense of the word, read.* O genius of English good sense,

* The most disingenuous instances in Schlegel of familiar acquaintance claimed with subjects of which he is necessarily ignorant, are the numerous passages in which he speaks of philosophers, especially of Spinoza, Leibnitz, and Kant. In such cases his sentences are always most artifically and jesuitically constructed, to give him the air of being quite at his ease on the one hand, and yet, on the other, to avoid committing himself by too much descent into particulars. So dangerous, however, is it for the ablest man to attempt speaking of what he does not understand, that, as a sailor will detect a landsman, however expert in the use of nautical diction, before he has uttered two sentences, so, with all his art and finesse, and speaking besides to questions of his own choosing, yet cannot Schlegel escape detection in any one instance when he has attempted to act the philosopher. Even where the thing said is not otherwise objectionable, it generally detects itself as the remark of a novice, by addressing itself to something extra-essential in the philosophy, and which a true judge would have passed over as impertinent to the real business of the system. Of the ludicrous blunders which inevitably arise in both Bouterwek and Schlegel, from hasty reading, or no reading at all, I noted some curious instances in my pocket-book; but, not having it with me, I shall mention two from memory. Bouterwek and Schlegel both would be highly offended, I suppose, if I were to doubt whether they had ever read the Paradise Lost.

keep any child of mine from ever sacrificing his peace and intellectual health to such a life of showy emptiness, of pretence, of noise, and of words; and even with a view to the opinion of others, if it were worth while sacrificing very much to *that*, teach him how far more enviable is the reputation of having produced even one work, though but in a lower department of art, and which has given pleasure to myriads—(such, suppose, as *The Vicar of Wakefield*)—than to have lived in the wonderment of a gazing crowd, like a rope-dancer, or a posture-master, with the fame of

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"O calumny, vile calumny! We that have given such fine criticisms upon it, not to have read it!" Yes; but there is such a case *in rerum naturâ* as that of criticising a work which the critic had not even seen. Now, that Bouterwek had not read the Paradise Lost, I think probable from this: Bodmer, during part of the first half of the last century, as is known to the students of German literature, was at the head of a party who supported the English literature against the French party of the old dolt Gottsched. From some work of Bodmer's, Bouterwek quotes with praise a passage which, from being in plain German prose, he supposes to be Bodmer's, but which, unfortunately, happens to be a passage in the Paradise Lost, and so memorable a passage that no one having once read it could have failed to recognise it. So much for Bouterwek. As to Schlegel, the presumption against him rests upon this; he is lecturing Milton in a high professor's style for his choice of a subject: "Milton," says he, "did not consider that the fall of man was but an inchoate action, but a part of a system, of which the restoration of man is another and equally essential part. The action of the Paradise Lost is, therefore, essentially imperfect." (Quoting from memory, and from a memory some years old, I do not pretend to give the words, but this is the sense.) Now, *pace tanti viri*, Milton *did* consider this, and has provided for it by a magnificent expedient, which a man who had read the Paradise Lost would have been likely to remember, namely, by the Vision combined with the Narrative of the Archangel, in which his final restoration is made known to Adam; without which, indeed, to say nothing of Mr. Schlegel's objection, the poem could not have closed with that *repose* necessary as the final impression of any great work of art.

incredible attainments that tend to no man's pleasure, and which perish to the remembrance of all men as soon as their possessor is in his grave.

Thus, at some risk of fatiguing you, I have endeavoured to sharpen your attention to the extreme danger which threatens a self-instructor in the besetting temptations to an over cultivation of languages; temptations which, whether appealing to his vanity and love of ostentation, or to his craving for a multifarious mastery over books, terminate in the same evil of substituting a barren study of words, which is, besides, the most lingering of all studies, for the healthy exercises of the intellect. All the great European poets, orators, and wits, are mentioned in a man's hearing so often, and so much discussion is constantly going on about their comparative merits, that a body of irritation and curiosity collects about these names, and unites with more legitimate feelings to persuade a man that it is necessary he should read them all—each in his own language. In a celebrated satire (*The Pursuits of Literature*), much read in my youth, and which I myself read about twenty-five years ago, I remember one counsel—there addressed to young men, but, in fact, of universal application. "I call upon them," said the author, "to *dare* to be ignorant of many things:" a wise counsel, and justly expressed; for it requires much courage to forsake popular paths of knowledge, merely upon a conviction that they are not favourable to the ultimate ends of knowledge. In you, however, *that* sort of courage may be presumed; but how will you "dare to be ignorant" of many things in opposition to the cravings of your own mind? Simply thus: destroy these false cravings by introducing a healthier state of the organ. A good scheme of study will soon show itself to be such by this one test—that it will exclude as powerfully as it will

appropriate; it will be a system of repulsion no less than of attraction; once thoroughly possessed and occupied by the deep and genial pleasures of one truly intellectual pursuit, you will be easy and indifferent to all others that had previously teased you with transient excitement; just as you will sometimes see a man superficially irritated, as it were, with wandering fits of liking for three or four women at once, which he is absurd enough to call "being in love;" but, once profoundly in love (supposing him capable of being so), he never makes such a mistake again, all his feelings after *that* being absorbed into a sublime unity. Now, without anticipating this scheme of study out of its place, yet in general you know whether your intentions lean most to science or to literature. For upon this decision revolve the whole motives which can determine your choice of languages; as, for instance, if you are in quest of science or philosophy, no language in Europe at this day (unless the Turkish) is so slenderly furnished as the Spanish; on the other hand, for literature, I am disposed to think that after the English none is so wealthy (I mean in quality, not in quantity).

Here, however, to prevent all mistakes, let me establish one necessary distinction. The word *literature* is a perpetual source of confusion, because it is used in two senses, and those senses liable to be confounded with each other. In a philosophical use of the word, literature is the direct and adequate antithesis of books of knowledge. But, in a popular use, it is a mere term of convenience for expressing inclusively the total books in a language. In this latter sense, a dictionary, a grammar, a spelling-book, an almanac, a pharmacopœia, a Parliamentary report, a system of farriery, a treatise on billiards, the Court Calendar, &c., belong to the literature. But, in the philosophical sense, not only would

it be ludicrous to reckon these as parts of the literature, but even books of much higher pretensions must be excluded—as, for instance, books of voyages and travels, and generally all books in which the matter to be communicated is paramount to the manner or form of its communication ("ornari res ipsa negat, contenta doceri"). It is difficult to construct the idea of "literature" with severe accuracy; for it is a fine art—the supreme fine art, and liable to the difficulties which attend such a subtle notion; in fact, a severe construction of the idea must be the *result* of a philosophical investigation into this subject, and cannot precede it. But, for the sake of obtaining some expression for literature that may answer our present purpose, let us throw the question into another form. I have said that the antithesis of literature is books of knowledge. Now, what is that antithesis to *knowledge*, which is here implicitly latent in the word literature? The vulgar antithesis is *pleasure* ("aut prodesse volunt, aut delectare poetæ"). Books, we are told, propose to *instruct* or to *amuse*. Indeed! However, not to spend any words upon it, I suppose you will admit that this wretched antithesis will be of no service to us. And, by the way, let me remark to you, in this, as in other cases, how men by their own errors of understanding, by feeble thinking, and inadequate distinctions, forge chains of meanness and servility for themselves. For, this miserable alternative being once admitted, observe what follows. In which class of books does the Paradise Lost stand? Among those which instruct, or those which *amuse?* Now, if a man answers among those which instruct, he lies; for there is no instruction in it, nor could be in any great poem, according to the meaning which the word must bear in this distinction, unless it is meant that it should involve its own antithesis.

But if he says, "No; amongst those which amuse," then what a beast must he be to degrade, and in this way, what has done the most of any human work to raise and dignify human nature. But the truth is, you see that the idiot does not wish to degrade it; on the contrary, he would willingly tell a lie in its favour, if that would be admitted; but such is the miserable state of slavery to which he has reduced himself by his own puny distinction; for, as soon as he hops out of one of his little cells, he is under a necessity of hopping into the other. The true antithesis* to knowledge, in this case, is not *pleasure*, but power. All that is literature seeks to communicate power; all that is not literature, to communicate knowledge. Now, if it be asked what is meant by communicating power, I, in my turn, would ask by what name a man would designate the case in which I should be made to feel vividly, and with a vital consciousness, emotions which ordinary life rarely or never

* For which distinction, as for most of the sound criticism on poetry, or any subject connected with it that I have ever met with, I must acknowledge my obligations to many years' conversation with Mr. Wordsworth. Upon this occasion it may be useful to notice that there is a rhetorical use of the word "power," very different from the analytic one here introduced, which, also, is due originally to Mr. Wordsworth, and will be found in no book before 1798; this is now become a regular slang term in London conversation. In reference to which, it is worth notice that a critic, speaking of the late Mr. Shelley, a year or two ago, in the most popular literary journal of the day, said, "It is alleged that there is power in Mr. Shelley's poetry; now, there can be no power shown in poetry, except by writing good poems" (or words to that effect). Waiving, however, the question of Mr. Shelley's merits, so far is this remark from being true, that the word was originally introduced expressly to provide for the case where, though the poem was *not* good from defect in the *composition*, or from other causes, the stamina and *matériel* of good poetry as fine thinking and passionate conceptions, could not be denied to exist.

supplies occasions for exciting, and which had previously lain unwakened, and hardly within the dawn of consciousness—as myriads of modes of feeling are at this moment in every human mind for want of a poet to organize them? I say, when these inert and sleeping forms *are* organized, when these possibilities *are* actualized, is this conscious and living possession of mine *power*, or what is it?

When, in King Lear, the height, and depth, and breadth, of human passion is revealed to us, and, for the purposes of a sublime antagonism, is revealed in the weakness of an old man's nature, and in one night two worlds of storm are brought face to face—the human world, and the world of physical nature—mirrors of each other, semichoral antiphonies, strophe and antistrophe heaving with rival convulsions, and with the double darkness of night and madness,—when I am thus suddenly startled into a feeling of the infinity of the world within me, is this power, or what may I call it? Space, again, what is it in most men's minds? The lifeless form of the world without us, a postulate of the geometrician, with no more vitality or real existence to their feelings than the square root of two. But, if Milton has been able to *inform* this empty theatre, peopling it with Titanic shadows, forms that sat at the eldest counsels of the infant world, chaos and original night,—

> "Ghostly shapes,
> To meet at noontide, Fear and trembling Hope,
> Death the Skeleton,
> And Time the Shadow,"—

so that, from being a thing to inscribe with diagrams, it has become under his hands a vital agent on the human mind,—I presume that I may justly express the tendency of the Paradise Lost, by saying that it communicates

power; a pretension far above all communication of knowledge. Henceforth, therefore, I shall use the antithesis power and knowledge as the most philosophical expression for literature (that is, Literæ Humaniores) and anti-literature (that is, Literæ didacticæ—Παιδεια).

Now, then, prepared with this distinction, let us inquire whether—weighing the difficulties against the benefits—there is an overbalance of motive for you with your purposes to study what are inaccurately termed the "classical" languages.* And first with respect to Greek, we have often had the question debated, and in our own days, solemn challenges thrown out, and solemn adjudications given on the question, whether any benefit corresponding to the time and the labour can be derived from the study of the ancient classics. Hitherto, however, the question could not be rightly shaped; for, as no man chose to plead "amusement" as a sufficient motive for so great an undertaking, it was always debated with a single reference to the *knowledge* involved in those literatures. But this is a ground wholly untenable. For, let the knowledge be what it might, all knowledge is

* A late writer has announced it as a matter of discovery, that the term "classics" is applicable also to the modern languages. But, surely, this was never doubted by any man who considered the meaning and origin of the term. It is drawn, as the reader must be reminded, from the political economy of Rome. Such a man was rated as to his income in the third class, such another in the fourth, and so on; but he who was in the highest was said emphatically to be of *the* class, "classicus," a class-man, without adding the number, as in that case superfluous. Hence, by an obvious analogy, the best authors were rated as classici, or men of the highest class; just as in English we say, "men of rank," absolutely, for men who are in the highest ranks of the State. The particular error by which this mere formal term of relation was *materiated* (if I may so say) in one of its accidents (namely, the application to Greek and Roman writers), is one of the commonest and most natural.

translateable; and translateable without one atom of loss. If this were all, therefore, common sense would prescribe that faithful translations should be executed of all the classics, and all men in future depend upon these vicarious labours. With respect to the Greek, this would soon be accomplished; for what is the knowledge which lurks in that language? All knowledge may be commodiously distributed into science and erudition; of the latter (antiquities, geography, philology, theology, &c.), there is a very considerable body; of the former, but little, namely, the mathematical and musical works, and the medical works—what else? Nothing that can deserve the name of science, except the single *organon* of Aristotle. With Greek medicine I suppose that you have no concern. As to mathematics, a man must be an idiot if he were to study Greek for the sake of Archimedes, Apollonius, or Diophantus. In Latin or in French you may find them all regularly translated, and parts of them embodied in the works of English mathematicians. Besides, if it were otherwise, where the notions and all the relations are so few, elementary, and determinate, and the vocabulary therefore so scanty, as in mathematics, it could not be necessary to learn Greek, even if you were disposed to read the mathematicians in that language. I see no marvel in Halley's having translated an Arabic manuscript on mathematics, with no previous knowledge of Arabic; on the contrary, it is a case (and not a very difficult case) of the art of deciphering, so much practised by Wallis and other great mathematicians contemporary with Halley. But all this is an idle disputation; for the knowledge of whatsoever sort which lies in Grecian mines, wretchedly as we are furnished with vernacular translations, the Latin version will always supply. This, therefore, is not the ground to be taken by

the advocate of Greek letters. It is not for knowledge that Greek is worth learning, but for power. Here arises the question—Of what value is this power? that is, how is the Grecian literature to be rated in relation to other literatures? Now, is it not only because "De Carthagine satius est silere quam parciùs dicere," but also because in my judgment there is no more offensive form of levity than the readiness to speak on great problems, incidentally and occasionally,—that I shall wholly decline this question. We have hitherto seen no rational criticism on Greek literature; nor, indeed, to say the truth, much criticism which teaches anything, or solves anything, upon any literature. I shall simply suggest one consideration to you. The question is limited wholly, as you see, to the value of the literature in the proper sense of that word. Now, it is my private theory, to which you will allow what degree of weight you please, that the antique or pagan literature is a polar antagonist to the modern or Christian literature; that each is an evolution from a distinct principle, having nothing in common but what is necessarily common to all modes of thought, namely, good sense and logic; and that they are to be criticised from different stations and points of view. This same thought has occurred to others; but no great advance is made simply by propounding the general thesis; and as yet nobody has done more.* It is only by the development of this thesis that any real service

* Nor do I much expect, *will* do more: which opinion I build on the particular formula chosen for expressing the opposition of the antique and the Christian literature, namely, the classical and the romantic. This seeming to me to imply a total misconception of the true principle on which the distinction rests, I naturally look for no further developments of the thesis from that quarter.

can be performed. This I have myself attempted, in a series of "reveries" on that subject; and, if you continue to hesitate on the question of learning Greek now that you know exactly how that question is shaped, and to what it points, my manuscript contains all the assistance that it is in *my* power to offer you in such a dilemma. The difference of the antique from the Christian literature, you must bear in mind, is not like that between English and Spanish literature—species and species—but as between genus and genus. The advantages, therefore, are—1, the *power* which it offers generally as a literature; 2, the new phases under which it presents the human mind; the antique being the other hemisphere, as it were, which, with our own or Christian hemisphere, composes the entire sphere of human intellectual energy.

So much for the Greek. Now, as to the Latin, the case is wholly reversed. Here the literature is of far less value; and, on the whole, with your views, it might be doubted whether it would recompense your pains. But the anti-literature (as for want of a strict antithesis I must call it) is inestimable; Latin having been the universal language of Christendom for so long a period. The Latin works since the restoration of letters are alone of immense value for knowledge of every kind; much science, inexhaustible erudition; and to this day in Germany, and elsewhere on the Continent, the best part of the latter is communicated in Latin. Now, though all knowledge *is* (which power is not) adequately communicable by translation, yet as there is no hope that the immense bibliotheca of Latin accumulated in the last three centuries ever will be translated, you cannot possibly dispense with this language; and, that being so, it is fortunate that you have already a superficial

acquaintance with it. The best means of cultivating it further, and the grounds of selection amongst the *modern* languages of Christendom, I will discuss fully in my next letter.

LETTER IV.

My dear Sir,—It is my misfortune to have been under the necessity too often of writing rapidly, and without opportunities for after-revision. In cases where much *composition** is demanded, this is a serious misfortune, and sometimes irreparable, except at the price of recasting the whole work. But, to a subject like the present, little of what is properly called composition is applicable; and somewhat the less from the indeterminate form of *letters* into which I have purposely thrown my communications. Errors in composition apart, there can be no others of importance, except such as relate to the matter; and those are not at all the more incident to a man because he is in a hurry. Not to be too much at leisure is, indeed, often an advantage. On no occasion of their lives do men generally speak better than on the scaffold, and with the executioner at their side; partly, indeed, because they are then most in earnest, and unsolicitous about effect; but partly, also, because the pressure of the time sharpens and

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* "*Composition.*"—This word I use in a sense, not indeed peculiar to myself, but yet not very common, nor anywhere, that I know of, sufficiently developed. It is of the highest importance in criticism; and, therefore, I shall add a note upon the true construction of the idea, either at the end of this letter or the next, according to the space left.

condenses the faculty of abstracting the capital points at issue. On this account I do not plead haste as an absolute and unmitigated disadvantage. Haste palliates what haste occasions. Now, there is no haste which can occasion oversights, as to the matter, to him who has meditated sufficiently upon his subject; all that haste can do in such a case is to affect the language with respect to accuracy and precision; and thus far I plead it. I shall never plead it as shrinking from the severest responsibility for the thoughts and substance of anything I say; but often in palliation of expressions careless or ill chosen. And at no time can I stand more in need of such indulgence than at present, when I write both hastily and under circumstances of— But no matter what. Believe, in general, that I write under circumstances as unfavourable for careful selection of words as can well be imagined.

In my last letter I declined to speak of the antique literature, as a subject too unwieldy and unmanageable for my limits. I now recur to it for the sake of guarding and restraining that particular sentence in which I have spoken of the Roman literature as inferior to the Greek. In common with all the world, I must, of necessity, think it so in the drama, and generally in poetry κατ' ἐξοχην. Indeed, for some forms of poetry, even of the lower order, it was the misfortune of the Roman literature that they were not cultivated until the era of fastidious taste, which in every nation takes place at a certain stage of society. They were harshly transplanted as exotics, and never passed through the just degrees of a natural growth on Roman soil. Notwithstanding this, the most exquisite specimens of the lighter lyric which the world has yet seen must be sought for in Horace; and very few writers of any country have approached to Virgil in the art of *composition*, how

ever low we may be disposed at this day to rank him as a poet, when tried in the unequal contest with the sublimities of the Christian literature. The truth is (and this is worth being attended to), that the peculiar sublimity of the Roman mind does not express itself, nor is it at all to be sought, in their poetry. Poetry, according to the Roman ideal of it, was not an adequate organ for the grander movements of the national mind. Roman sublimity must be looked for in Roman acts and in Roman sayings.

For the acts, see their history for a thousand years, the early and fabulous part not excepted,—which, for the very reason that it *is* fabulous,* must be taken as so much the purer product of the Roman mind. Even the infancy of Rome was like the cradle of Hercules, glorified by splendid marvels,—"Nec licuit populis parvum te, Nile, videre." For their sayings, for their anecdotes, their serious bon-mots, there are none equal to the Roman in grandeur. "English-

* In addition to the arguments lately urged in the *Quarterly Review*, for bastardizing and degrading the early history of Rome, I may here mention two others, alleged many years ago in conversation by a friend of mine. 1. *The immoderate length of time assigned to the reigns of the kings.* For though it is possible that one king's reign may cover two entire generations (as that of George III.), or even two and a half (as that of Louis XIV.), yet it is in the highest degree improbable that a series of seven kings, immediately consecutive, should average, in the most favourable cases, more than twenty-four years for each: for the proof of which, see the Collective Chronology of Ancient and Modern Europe. 2. *The dramatic and artificial casting of the parts for these kings.* Each steps forward as a scenical person, to play a distinct part or character. One makes Rome; another makes laws; another makes an army; another, religious rights, &c. And last of all comes a gentleman who "enacts the brute part" of destroying, in effect, what his predecessors had constructed; and thus furnishes a decorous catastrophe for the whole play, and a magnificent birth for the republican form of government.

man!" said a Frenchman once to me, "you that contest our claim to the sublime, and contend that 'la manière noble' of our artists wears a falsetto character, what do you think of that saying of a king of ours, That it became not the King of France to avenge the injuries of the Duke of Orleans (that is, of himself, under that title)?" "Think!" said I, "why, I think it is a magnificent and regal speech, and such is my English generosity, that I heartily wish the Emperor Hadrian had not said the same thing fifteen hundred years before." * I would willingly give five shillings myself to purchase the copyright of the saying for the French nation; for *they* want it, and the Romans could spare it. Pereant qui ante nos nostra dixerunt! Cursed be the name of Hadrian that stands between France and the sublimest of bon-mots! Where, again, will you find a more adequate expression of the Roman majesty than in the saying of Trajan—Imperatorem oportere stantem mori—that Cæsar ought to die standing, a speech of imperatorial grandeur; implying that he, who was "the foremost man of all this world," and, in regard to all other nations, the representative of his own, should express its characteristic virtue in his farewell act,—should die *in procinctu*,—aud should meet the last enemy, † as the first, with a

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* Submonente quodam ut in pristinos inimicos animadverteret, negavit se ita facturum? adjectâ civili voce,—Minime licere Principi Romano, ut quæ privatus agitasset odia—ista Imperator exequi. *Spartian in Had.*—Vid. Histor. August.

† Neither let it be objected that it is irrational to oppose what there is no chance of opposing with success. When the Roman Senate kept their seats immovably upon the entrance of the Gauls reeking from the storm of Rome, they did it not as supposing that this spectacle of senatorial dignity could disarm the wrath of their savage enemy; if they had, their act would have lost all its splendour. The language of their conduct was this: So far as the gran-

Roman countenance, and in a soldier's attitude. If this had an imperatorial, what follows had a consular majesty, and is almost the grandest story upon record. Marius, the man who rose *à caligâ* to be seven times consul, was in a dungeon, and a slave was sent in with commission to put him to death. These were the persons,—the two extremities of exalted and forlorn humanity, its vanward and its rearward man, a Roman consul and an abject slave. But their natural relations to each other were, by the caprice of fortune, monstrously inverted. The consul was in chains: the slave was for a moment the arbiter of his fate. By what spells, what magic, did Marius reinstate himself in his natural prerogatives? By what marvels, drawn from heaven or from earth, did he, in the twinkling of an eye, again invest himself with the purple, and place between himself and his assassin a host of shadowy lictors? By the mere blank supremacy of great minds over weak ones. He *fascinated* the slave, as a rattlesnake does a bird. Standing "like Teneriffe," he smote him with his eye, and said, "Tunc, homo, audes occidere C. Marium?" Dost thou, fellow, presume to kill Caius Marius? Whereat the reptile, quaking under the voice, nor daring to affront the consular eye, sank gently to the ground, turned round upon his hands and feet, and, crawling out of the prison like any other vermin, left Marius standing in solitude, as steadfast and immovable as the capitol.

In such anecdotes as these it is—in the actions of trying

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deur of the will is concerned, we have carried our resistance to the last extremity, and have expressed it in the way suitable to our rank. For all beyond we were not answerable; and, having recorded our "protest" in such an emphatic language, death becomes no dishonour. The *stantem mori* expresses the same principle, but in a symbolic act.

emergencies and their appropriate circumstances—that I find the revelation of the Roman mind under its highest aspect. The Roman mind was great in the presence of man, mean in the presence of nature; impotent to comprehend or to delineate the internal strife of *passion*,* but powerful beyond any other national mind to display the energy of the *will* victorious over all passion. Hence it is that the true Roman sublime exists nowhere in such purity as in those works which were *not* composed with a reference to Grecian models. On this account I wholly dissent from the shallow classification which expresses the relations of merit between the writers of the Augustan period and that which followed, under the type of a golden and silver age. As artists, and with reference to composition, no doubt many of the writers of the latter age were rightly so classed; but an inferiority *quoad hoc* argues no uniform and absolute inferiority; and the fact is, that, in weight and grandeur of thought, the silver writers were much superior to the golden. Indeed, this might have been looked for on *à priori* grounds; for the silver writers were more truly Roman writers from two causes: first, because they trusted more to their own native style of thinking, and, looking less anxiously to Grecian archetypes, they wrote more naturally, feelingly, and originally; secondly, because the political circumstances of their times were advantageous, and liberated them from the suspicious caution which cramped the natural movements of a Roman mind on the first establishment of the monarchy. Whatever outrages of despotism occurred in the times of the silver

* So palpable is this truth, that the most unreflecting critics have hence been led to suspect the pretensions of the Atys to a Roman origin.

writers were sudden, transient, capricious, and personal, in their origin and in their direction: but, in the Augustan age, it was not the temper of Augustus, personally, and certainly not the temper of the writers leading them to any excesses of licentious speculation, which created the danger of bold thinking. The danger was in the times, which were unquiet and revolutionary. The struggle with the republican party was yet too recent; the wounds and cicatrices of the State too green; the existing order of things too immature and critical: the triumphant party still viewed *as a* party, and for that cause still feeling itself a party militant. Augustus had that chronic complaint of a "crick in the neck," of which later princes are said to have an acute attack every 30th of January. Hence a servile and timid tone in the literature. The fiercer republicans could not be safely mentioned. Even Cicero it was not decorous to praise; and Virgil, as perhaps you know, has, by insinuation, contrived to insult* his memory in the *Æneid*. But, as the irresponsible power of the emperors grew better secured, their jealousy of republican sentiment abated much of its keenness. And, considering that republican freedom of thought was the very matrix of Roman sublimity, it

* Orabunt alii causas melius. *Æn.* VI.—An opinion upon the Grecian superiority in this point, which is so doubtful even to us in our perfect impartiality at this day, as a general opinion without discrimination of persons, that we may be sure it could not spontaneously have occurred to a Roman in a burst of patriotic feeling, and must have been deliberately manufactured to meet the malignant wishes of Augustus. More especially because, in whatever relation of opposition or of indifference to the principles of a military government, to the Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos, Virgil might view the fine arts of painting, statuary, &c., he could not but have viewed the arts of forensic eloquence as standing in the closest alliance with that principle.

ought not to surprise us, that as fast as the national mind was lightened from the pressure which weighed upon the natural style of its sentiment, the literature should recoil into a freer movement, with an elasticity proportioned to the intensity and brevity of its depression. Accordingly, in Seneca the philosopher, in Lucan, in Tacitus, even in Pliny the Younger, &c., but especially in the two first, I affirm that there is a loftiness of thought more eminently and characteristically Roman than in any preceding writers: and in *that* view to rank them as writers of a silver age, is worthy only of those who are servile to the commonplaces of unthinking criticism.

The style of thought in the silver writers, as a raw material, was generally more valuable than that of their predecessors, however much they fell below them in the art of working up that material. And I shall add further that, when I admit the vast defects of Luther, for instance, as an artist, I would not be understood as involving in that concession the least toleration of the vulgar doctrine, that the diction of the silver writers is in any respect below the standard of pure Latinity as existing in the writers of the Ciceronian age. A better structure of Latinity I will affirm boldly, does not exist than that of Petronius Arbiter: and taken as a body, the writers of what is denominated the silver age are for diction no less Roman, and for thought much more intensely Roman, than any other equal number of writers from the preceding ages; and, with a very few exceptions, are the best fitted to take a permanent station in the regard of men at your age or mine, when the meditative faculties, if they exist at all, are apt to expand, and to excite a craving for a greater weight of thought than is usually to be met with in the elder writers of the Roman literature. This explanation made, and having made that

"amende honorable" to the Roman literature which my own gratitude demanded, I come to the remaining part of my business in this letter, namely, the grounds of choice amongst the languages of modern Europe. Reserving to my conclusion anything I have to say upon these *languages*, as depositories of *literature* properly so called, I shall first speak of them as depositories of *knowledge*. Among the four great races of men in Europe, namely—1. The Celtic, occupying a few of the western extremities* of Europe; 2. The Teutonic, occupying the northern and midland parts;† 3. The Latin (blended with Teutonic tribes) occupying the south;‡ and, 4. The Sclavonic, occupying the east, it is evident that of the first and the last it is unnecessary to say anything in this place, because their pretensions to literature do not extend to our present sense of the word. No Celt even, however extravagant, pretends to the possession of a body of Celtic philosophy and Celtic science of independent growth. The Celtic and Sclavonic languages therefore dismissed, our business at present is with those of the Latin and the Teutonic families. Now three of the Latin family, namely, the Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese, are at once excluded for the purpose before us: because it is notorious that, from political and religious causes, these three nations have but feebly participated in the gene-

* Namely: 1. In the Cornish, Welsh, Manks, Highland, Scotch, and Irish provinces of the British empire (in the first and last it is true that the barbarous Celtic blood has been too much improved by Teutonic admixture to allow of our considering the existing races as purely Celtic; this, however, does not affect the classification of their genuine literary relics); 2. In Biscay; and 3. In Basse Bretagne (Armorica): to say nothing of a Celtic district said to exist in the Alps, &c.

† Namely: Iceland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, England, and Scotch Lowlands.

‡ Namely: Italy, France, Spain, and Portugal.

ral scientific and philosophic labours of the age. Italy, indeed, has cultivated natural philosophy with an exclusive zeal; a direction probably impressed upon the national mind by patriotic reverence for her great names in that department. But, merely for the sake of such knowledge (supposing no other motive), it would be idle to pay the price of learning a language,—all the current contributions to science being regularly gathered into the general garner of Europe by the scientific journals both at home and abroad. Of the Latin languages, therefore, which are wholly the languages of Catholic nations, but one—that is, the French —can present any sufficient attractions to a student in search of general knowledge. Of the Teutonic literatures, on the other hand, which are the adequate representatives of the Protestant intellectual interest in Europe (no Catholic nations speaking a Teutonic language except the southern states of Germany and part of the Netherlands), all give way at once to the paramount pretensions of the English and the German. I do not say this with the levity of ignorance, as if presuming, as a matter of course, that in a small territory, such as Denmark, *e.g.*, the literature must, of necessity, bear a value proportioned to its political rank. On the contrary, I have some acquaintance with the Danish literature;* and though, in the proper sense of the word literature as a body of creative art, I cannot esteem

* I take this opportunity of mentioning a curious fact which I ascertained about twelve years ago, when studying the Danish. The English and Scotch philologists have generally asserted that the Danish invasions in the ninth and tenth centuries, and their settlements in various parts of the island (as Lincolnshire, Cumberland, &c.), had left little or no traces of themselves in the language. This opinion has been lately reasserted in Dr. Murray's work on the European languages. It is, however, inaccurate. For the remarkable dialect spoken amongst the lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland,

it highly, yet as a depository of knowledge in one particular direction—namely, the direction of historical and antiquarian research—it has, undoubtedly, high claims upon the student's attention. But this is a direction in which a long series of writers descending from a remote antiquity is of more importance than a great contemporary body; whereas, for the cultivation of knowledge in a more comprehensive sense, and arrived at its present stage, large simultaneous efforts are of more importance than the longest successive efforts. Now, for such a purpose, it is self-evident that the means at the disposal of every State must be in due proportion to its statistical rank; for not only must the scientific institutions, the purchasers of books, &c., keep pace with the general progress of the country, but commerce alone, and the arts of life, which are so much benefited by science, naturally react upon science in a degree proportioned to the wealth of every State in their demand for the aids of chemistry, mechanics, engineering, &c. &c.; a fact with its inevitable results, to which I need scarcely call your attention. Moreover, waiving all mere presumptive arguments, the bare amount of books annually published in the several countries of Europe puts the matter out of all doubt that the great commerce of thought and knowledge in the civilized world is at this day con-

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together with the names of the mountains, tarns, &c., most of which resist all attempts to unlock their meaning from the Anglo-Saxon, or any other form of the Teutonic, are pure Danish—generally intelligible from the modern Danish of this day, but in all cases from the elder form of the Danish. Whenever my *Opera Omnia* are collected, I shall reprint a little memoir on this subject, which I inserted about four years ago in a provincial newspaper: or possibly before that event, for the amusement of the lake tourists, Mr. Wordsworth may do me the favour to accept it as an appendix to his work on the English lakes.

ducted in three languages—the English, the German, and the French. You, therefore, having the good fortune to be an Englishman, are to make your choice between the two last; and this being so, I conceive that there is no room for hesitation,—the "detur pulchriori" being, in this case (that is, remember, with an exclusive reference to *knowledge*), a direction easily followed.

Dr. Johnson was accustomed to say of the French literature, as the kindest thing he had to say about it, that he valued it chiefly for this reason—that it had a book upon every subject. How far this might be a reasonable opinion fifty years ago, and understood, as Dr. Johnson must have meant it, of the French literature, as compared with the English of the same period, I will not pretend to say. It has certainly ceased to be true even under these restrictions, and is in flagrant opposition to the truth if extended to the French in its relation to the German. Undoubtedly the French literature holds out to the student some peculiar advantages, as what literature does not?—some, even, which we should not have anticipated; for, though we justly value ourselves as a nation upon our classical education, yet no literature is poorer than the English in the learning of classical antiquities,—our Bentleys, even, and our Porsons, having thrown all their learning into the channel of philology; whilst a single volume of the Memoirs of the French Academy of Inscriptions contains more useful antiquarian research than a whole English library. In digests of history, again, the French language is richer than ours, and in their dictionaries of miscellaneous knowledge (*not* in their encyclopedias). But all these are advantages of the French only in relation to the English and not to the German literature, which, for vast compass, variety, and extent, far exceeds all others as a depository for

the current accumulations of knowledge. The mere number of books published annually in Germany, compared with the annual product of France and England, is alone a satisfactory evidence of this assertion. With relation to France, it is a second argument in its favour that the intellectual activity of Germany is not intensely accumulated in one great capital, as it is in Paris; but whilst it is here and there converged intensely enough for all useful purposes (as at Berlin, Königsberg, Leipsic, Dresden, Vienna, Munich, &c.), it is also healthily diffused over the whole territory. There is not a sixth-rate town in Protestant Germany which does not annually contribute its quota of books: intellectual culture has manured the whole soil: not a district but it has penetrated,

"Like Spring,
Which leaves no corner of the land untouched."

A third advantage on the side of Germany (an advantage for this purpose) is its division into a great number of independent states. From this circumstance it derives the benefit of an internal rivalship amongst its several members, over and above that general external rivalship which it maintains with other nations. An advantage of the same kind we enjoy in England. The British nation is fortunately split into three great divisions, and thus a national feeling of emulation and contest is excited,—slight, indeed, or none at all on the part of the English (not from any merit, but from mere decay of patriotic feeling), stronger on the part of the Irish, and sometimes illiberally and odiously strong on the part of the Scotch (especially as you descend below the rank of gentlemen). But, disgusting as it sometimes is in its expression, this nationality is of great service to our efforts in all directions. A triple power is gained for internal excitement of the national energies; whilst, in

regard to any external enemy or any external rival, the three nations act with the unity of a single force. But the most conspicuous advantage of the German literature is its great originality and boldness of speculation, and the character of masculine austerity and precision impressed upon their scientific labours by the philosophy of Leibnitz and Wolff heretofore, and by the severer philosophy of modern days. Speaking of the German literature at all, it would be mere affectation to say nothing on a subject so far-famed and so much misrepresented as this. Yet, to summon myself to an effort of this kind at a moment of weariness and exhausted attention, would be the certain means of inflicting great weariness upon you. For the present, therefore, I take my leave.

LETTER V.

My dear Sir,—In my last letter, having noticed the English, the German, and the French, as the three languages in which the great commerce of thought and knowledge in the civilized world is at this day conducted, and having attributed three very considerable advantages to the German as compared with the French, I brought forward in conclusion, as an advantage more conspicuous even than any I had before insisted on, the great originality and boldness of speculation which have distinguished the philosophic researches of Germany for the last hundred and fifty years.* On this point, as it stood opposed to some prejudices and gross mis-statements among ourselves, I naturally declined to speak at the close of a letter which had, perhaps, already

* Dating from the earliest works of Leibnitz, rather more.

exhausted your attention. But, as it would be mere affectation wholly to evade a question about which so much interest* has gathered, and an interest which, from its objects and grounds, must be so durable, I gave you reason to expect that I would say a few words on that which is at this time understood by the term *German Philosophy*, that is, the philosophy of Kant. This I shall now do. But, let me remind you for what purpose, that you may not lay to my charge, as a fault, *that* limited notice of my subject which the nature and proportions of my plan prescribe. In a short letter it cannot be supposed possible, if it were otherwise right on this occasion, that I should undertake

* I have heard it alleged as a reason why no great interest in the German philosophy can exist or can be created amongst the English that "there is no demand for books on that subject:" in which remark there is a singular confusion of thought. Was there any "demand" for the Newtonian philosophy, until the Newtonian philosophy appeared? How should there be any "demand" for books which do not exist? But, considering the lofty pretensions of the Kantean philosophy, it would argue a gross ignorance of human nature to suppose that no interest had already attended the statement of these pretensions whenever they have been made known; and, in fact, amongst thoughtful and intellectual men a very deep interest has long existed on the subject, as my own experience has been sufficient to convince me. Indeed, what evidence could be alleged more strong of apathy and decay in all intellectual activity, and in all honourable direction of intellectual interests, than the possibility that a systematic philosophy should arise in a great nation near to our own, and should claim to have settled for ever many of the weightiest questions which concern the dignity and future progress of the human species, and should yet attract no attention or interest? We may be assured that no nation not thoroughly emasculated in power of mind—that is, so long as any severe studies survive amongst her—can ever be so far degraded. But these judgments come of attending too much to the movements of what is called "the literary world:" literature very imperfectly represents the intellectual interests of any people; and literary people are, in a large proportion, as little intellectual people as any one meets with.

an analysis of a philosophy so comprehensive as to leave no track of legitimate interests untouched, and so profound as to presuppose many preparatory exercises of the understanding. What the course of my subject demands is, that I should liberate the name and reputation of the Kantean philosophy from any delusion which may collect about its purposes and pretensions, through the representations of those who have spoken of it amongst ourselves. The case is this: I have advised you to pay a special attention to the German literature, as a literature of knowledge, not of power; and, amongst other reasons for this advice, I have alleged the high character and pretensions of its philosophy. But these pretensions have been met by attacks, or by gross misrepresentations, from all writers, within my knowledge, who have at all noticed the philosophy in this country. So far as these have fallen in your way, they must naturally have indisposed you to my advice; and it becomes, therefore, my business to point out any facts which may tend to disarm the authority of these writers, just so far as to replace you in the situation of a neutral and unprejudiced student.

The persons who originally introduced the Kantean philosophy to the notice of the English public, or rather attempted to do so, were two Germans—Dr. Willich and (not long after) Dr. Nitsch. Dr. Willich, I think, has been gone to Hades for these last dozen years; certainly his works have: and Dr. Nitsch, though not gone to Hades, is gone (I understand) to Germany, which answers my purpose as well; for it is not likely that a few words uttered in London will contrive to find out a man buried in the throng of thirty million Germans. *Quoad hoc*, therefore, Dr. Nitsch may be considered no less defunct than Dr. Willich; and I can run no risk of wounding anybody's

feelings if I should pronounce both doctors very eminent blockheads. It is difficult to say which wrote the more absurd book. Willich's is a mere piece of book-making, and deserves no sort of attention. But Nitsch, who seems to have been a painstaking man, has produced a work which is thus far worthy of mention, that it reflects as in a mirror one feature common to most of the German commentaries upon Kant's works, and which it is right to expose. With very few exceptions, these works are constructed upon one simple principle: Finding it impossible to obtain any glimpse of Kant's meaning or drift, the writers naturally asked themselves what was to be done. Because a man does not understand one iota of his author, is he therefore not to comment upon him? That were hard indeed; and a sort of abstinence which it is more easy to recommend than to practise. Commentaries must be written; and, if not by those who understand the system (which would be the best plan), then (which is clearly the second-best plan) by those who do *not* understand it. Dr. Nitsch belonged to this latter very respectable body, for whose great numerical superiority to their rivals I can take upon myself to vouch. Being of their body, the worthy doctor adopted their expedient, which is simply this: never to deliver any doctrine except in the master's words; on all occasions to parrot the *ipsissima verba* of Kant; and not even to venture upon the experiment of a new illustration drawn from their own funds. Pretty nearly upon this principle was it that the wretched Brucker and others have constructed large histories of philosophy. Having no comprehension of the inner meaning and relations of any philosophic opinion, nor suspecting to what it tended, or in what necessities of the intellect it had arisen, how could the man do more than superstitiously adhere to that formula of words in

which it had pleased the philosopher to clothe it? It was unreasonable to expect he should. To require of him that he should present it in any new aspect of his own devising would have been tempting him into dangerous and perplexing situations: it would have been, in fact, a downright aggression upon his personal safety, and calling upon him to become *felo de se*. Every turn of a sentence might risk his breaking down; and no man is bound to risk his neck, credit, or understanding, for the benefit of another man's neck, credit, or understanding. "It's all very well," Dr. Nitsch and his brethren will say,—"it's all very well for you, gentlemen, that have no commenting to do, to understand your author; but, to expect us to understand him also, that have to write commentaries on him for two, four, and all the way up to twelve volumes 8vo, just serves to show how far the unreasonableness of human nature can go." The Doctor was determined on moral principles to make no compromise with such unreasonableness; and, in common with all his brethren, set his face against understanding each and every chapter, paragraph, or sentence, of Kant, so long as they were expected to do duty as commentators. I treat the matter ludicrously; but, in substance, I assure you that I do no wrong to the learned commentators;* and, under such auspices, you will not suppose that Kant came before the English public with any advantage of patronage. Between two such supporters as a Nitsch on the right hand, and a Willich on the left, I

* Under this denomination I comprehend all the rabble of abbreviators, abstractors, dictionary-makers, etc. etc., attached to the establishment of the Kantean philosophy. One of the last, by the way, Schmidt, the author of a Kantean dictionary, may be cited as the *beau idéal* of Kantean commentators. He was altogether agreed with Dr. Nitsch upon the duty of not understanding one's author;

know not *that* philosopher that would escape foundering. But, fortunately for Kant, the supporters themselves foundered; and no man that ever I met with had seen or heard of their books, or seen any man that *had* seen them. It did not appear that they were, or, logically speaking, could be forgotten; for no man had ever remembered them.

The two doctors having thus broken down, and set off severally to Hades and Germany, I recollect no authors of respectability who have since endeavoured to attract the attention of the English public to the Kantean philosophy, except—1. An anonymous writer in an early number of the *Edinburgh Review;* 2. Mr. Coleridge; 3. Mr. Dugald Stewart; 4. Madame de Staël, in a work published, I believe, originally in this country, and during her residence amongst us. I do not add Sir William Drummond to this list, because my recollection of anything he has written on the subject of Kant (in his Academical Questions) is very imperfect; nor Mr. W—, the reputed author of an article on Kant (the most elaborate, I am told, which at present exists in the English language) in the Encyclopædia Londinensis; for this essay, together with a few other notices of Kant in other encyclopædias, or elsewhere, have not happened to fall in my way. The four writers above mentioned were certainly the only ones on this subject who commanded sufficient influence, either directly in their own persons, or (as in the first case) vicariously in the channel through which the author communicated with the public,

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and acted up to his principle through life—being, in fact, what the Cambridge men call a *Bergen-op-zoom*, that is, one that sturdily defies his author, stands a siege of twelve or twenty years upon his understanding, and holds out to the last, impregnable to all the assaults of reason or argument, and the heaviest batteries of common sense.

considerably to affect the reputation of Kant in this country for better or worse. None of the four, except Mr. Coleridge, having, or professing to have, any direct acquaintance with the original works of Kant, but drawing their information from imbecile French books, &c., it would not be treating the other three with any injustice to dismiss their opinions without notice; for, even upon any one philosophical question, much more upon the fate of a great philosophical system supposed to be *sub judice*, it is as unworthy of a grave and thoughtful critic to rely upon the second-hand report of a flashy rhetorician, as it would be unbecoming and extra-judicial in a solemn trial to occupy the ear of the court with the gossip of a country town.

However, to omit no point of courtesy to any of these writers, I shall say a word or two upon each of them separately. The first and the third wrote in a spirit of hostility to Kant; the second and fourth, as friends. In that order I shall take them. The writer of the article in the *Edinburgh Review*, I suppose, upon the internal evidence, to have been the late Dr. Thomas Brown, a pupil of Mr. Dugald Stewart's, and his successor in the Moral Philosophy chair at Edinburgh. This is a matter of no importance in itself; nor am I in the habit of troubling myself or others with literary gossip of that sort; but I mention it as a conjecture of my own; because, if I happen to be right, it would be a very singular fact that the only two writers within my knowledge who have so far forgot the philosophic character as to attempt an examination of a vast and elaborate system of philosophy, not in the original, not in any authorized or accredited Latin version (of which there were two even at that time), not in any version at all, but in the tawdry rhetoric of a Parisian *philosophie*

à la mode, a sort of *philosophie pour les dames*,—that these two writers, thus remarkably agreeing in their readiness to forget the philosophic character, should also happen to have stood nearly connected in literary life. In such coincidences we suspect something more than a blind accident; we suspect the natural tendency of their philosophy, and believe ourselves furnished with a measure of its power to liberate the mind from rashness, from caprice, and injustice, in such deliberate acts, which it either suggests or tolerates. If their own philosophic curiosity was satisfied with information so slender, mere justice required that they should not, on so slight and suspicious a warrant, have grounded anything in disparagement of the philosophy or its founder. The book reviewed by the Edinburgh reviewer, and relied on for his account of the Kantean philosophy, is the essay of Villars; a book so entirely childish, that perhaps no mortification more profound could have fallen upon the reviewer than the discovery of the extent to which he had been duped by his author. Of this book no more needs to be said than that the very terms do not occur in it which express the hinges of the system. Mr. Stewart has confided chiefly in Dégérando; a much more sober-minded author, of more good sense, and a greater zeal for truth, but, unfortunately, with no more ability to penetrate below the surface of the Kantean system. M. Dégérando is represented as an unexceptionable evidence by Mr. Stewart, on the ground that he is admitted to be so by Kant's "countrymen." The "countrymen" of Kant,* merely *as* country-

* The reader may suppose that this could not possibly have been the meaning of Mr. Stewart. But a very general mistake exists as to the terminology of Kant—as though a foreigner must find some difficulties in it which are removed to a native. "His own countrymen,"

men, can have no more title to an opinion upon this point than a Grantham man could have a right to dogmatize on Sir Isaac Newton's philosophy, on the ground that he was a fellow-townsman of Sir Isaac's. The air of Königsberg makes no man a philosopher. But, if Mr. Stewart means that the competency of M. Dégérando has been admitted by those countrymen of Kant's whose educations have fitted them to understand him, and whose writings make it evident that they *have* understood him (such, for instance, as Reinhold, Schulze, Tieftrunk, Beck, Fichte, and Schelling), then he has been misinformed. The mere existence of such works as the *Histoire Comparée* of M. Dégérando, which cannot be regarded in a higher light than that of verbal indices to the corpus philosophiæ, is probably unknown to them; certainly, no books of that popular class are ever noticed by any of them, nor could rank higher in their eyes than an elementary school algebra in the eyes of a mathematician. If any man acknowledges Dégérando's attempt at a popular abstract of Kant as a sound one, *ipso facto*, he degrades himself from the right to any opinion upon the matter. The elementary notions of Kant, even the main problem of his great work, are not once so much as alluded to by Dégérando. And, by the way, if any man ever talks in your presence about Kant, and you suspect that he is talking without knowledge, and wish to put a stop to him, I will tell you how you shall effect that end. Say to him

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says a respectable literary journal, when speaking of Kant (*Edinburgh Monthly Review* for August 1820, p. 168)—"His own countrymen find it difficult to comprehend his meaning; and they dispute about it to this day." Why not? The terminology of Kant is partly Grecian, partly scholastic; and how should either become intelligible to a German *qua* German, merely because they are fitted with German terminations and inflexions?

as follows: Sir, I am instructed by my counsel, learned in this matter, that the main problem of the philosophy you are talking of lies involved in the term *transcendental*, and that it may be thus expressed: "*An detur aliquid transcendentale in mente humanâ*,"—"Is there in the human mind anything which realizes the notion of *transcendental* (as that notion is regulated and used by Kant)?" Now, as this makes it necessary above all things to master that notion in the fullest sense, I will thank you to explain it to me. And, as I am further instructed that the answer to this question is affirmative, and is involved in the term *synthetic unity*, I will trouble you to make it clear to me wherein the difference lies between this and what is termed *analytic unity*. Thus speaking, you will in all probability gag him; which is, at any rate, one desirable thing gained when a man insists on disturbing a company by disputing and talking philosophy.

But, to return: as there must always exist a strong presumption against philosophy of Parisian manufacture (which is in that department the Birmingham ware of Europe); secondly, as M. Dégérando had expressly admitted (in fact, boasted) that he had a little trimmed and embellished the Kantean system, in order to fit it for the society of "*les gens comme il faut*;" and, finally, as there were Latin versions, &c., of Kant, it must reasonably occur to any reader to ask why Mr. Stewart should not have consulted these. To this question Mr. Stewart answers, that he could not tolerate their "barbarous" style and nomenclature. I must confess that in such an answer I see nothing worthy of a philosopher; and should rather have looked for it from a literary *petit-maître* than from an emeritus Professor of Moral Philosophy. Will a philosopher decline a useful experiment in physics because it will soil his kid gloves?

Who thinks or cares about style in such studies that is sincerely and anxiously in quest of truth?* In fact, *style*, in any proper sense, is no more a possible thing in such investigations as the understanding is summoned to by Kant, than it is in Euclid's Elements. As to the nomenclature again, supposing that it *had* been barbarous, who objects to the nomenclature of modern chemistry, which is, *quoad materiam*, not only a barbarous, but a hybrid nomenclature? Wherever law and intellectual order prevail, they *debarbarize* (if I may be allowed such a coinage) what in its elements might be barbarous: the form ennobles the matter. But, how is the Kantean terminology barbarous, which is chiefly composed of Grecian or Latin terms? In constructing it, Kant proceeded in this way: where it was possible, he recalled obsolete and forgotten terms from the Platonic philosophy and from the schoolmen, or restored words abused by popular use to their original philosophic meaning. In other cases, when there happen to exist double expressions for the same notion, he called in and reminted them, as it were. In doing this he was sometimes forestalled in part, and guided by the tendency of language itself. All languages, as it has been remarked, tend to clear themselves of synonymes as intellectual culture advances,—the superfluous words being taken up and appropriated by new shades and combinations of thought evolved in the progress of society. And, long before this appro-

* The diction of the particular book which had been recommended to Mr. Stewart's attention, namely, the *Expositio Systematica* of Phiseldek, a Danish professor, has all the merits which a philosophic diction can have, being remarkably perspicuous, precise, simple, and unaffected. It is too much of a mere metaphrase of Kant, and has too little variety of illustration: otherwise I do not know a better digest of the philosophy.

priation is fixed and petrified, as it were, into the acknowledged vocabulary of the language, an insensible *clinamen* (to borrow a Lucretian word) prepares the way for it. Thus, for instance, long before Mr. Wordsworth had unveiled the great philosophic distinction between the powers of *fancy* and *imagination*, the two words had begun to diverge from each other; the first being used to express a faculty somewhat capricious* and exempted from law, the latter to express a faculty more self-determined. When, therefore, it was at length perceived that under an apparent unity of meaning there lurked a real dualism, and for philosophic purposes it was necessary that this distinction should have its appropriate expression, this necessity was met half way by the *clinamen* which had already affected the popular usage of the words. So, again, in the words *Deist* and *Theist;* naturally, they should express the same notion: the one to a Latin, the other to a Grecian ear. But, of what use are such duplicates? It is well that the necessities of the understanding gradually reach all such cases by that insensible *clinamen* which fits them for a better purpose than that of extending the mere waste fertility of language, namely, by taking them up into the service of thought. In this instance *Deist* was used pretty generally throughout Europe to express the case of him who admits a God, but under the fewest predicates that will satisfy the conditions of the understanding. A *Theist*, on the other

* Which distinction comes out still more strongly in the secondary derivative *fanciful*, and the primary derivative *fantastic*. I say primary derivative, in reference to the history of the word:—1, φαντασια, whence *phantasy:* 2, for metrical purposes, *phant'sy* (as it is usually spelt in Sylvester's *Du Bartas*, and other scholarlike poems of that day): 3, by dropping the *t* in pronunciation; phansy or fancy. Now, from No. 1 comes *fantastic;* from No. 3 comes *fanciful*.

hand, even in popular use, denoted him who admits a God with some further (transcendental) predicates; as, for example, under the relation of a moral governor to the world. In such cases as this, therefore, where Kant found himself already anticipated by the progress of language, he did no more than regulate and ordinate the evident *nisus* and tendency of the popular usage into a severe definition. Where, however, the notions were of too subtle a nature to be laid hold of by the popular understanding, and too little within the daily use of life to be ever affected by the ordinary causes which mould the course of a language, there he commenced and finished the process of separation himself.

And what were the uses of all this? Why, the uses were these: *first*, in relation to the whole system of the transcendental philosophy: the new notions which were thus fixed and recorded were necessary to the system; they were useful in proportion as *that* was useful, that is, in proportion as it was true. *Secondly*, they extended the domain of human thought, apart from the system and independently of it. A perpetual challenge or summons is held out to the mind in the Kantean terminology to clear up and regulate its own conceptions, which, without discipline, are apt from their own subtle affinities to blend and run into each other. The new distinctions are so many intellectual problems to be mastered. And, even without any view to a formal study of the transcendental philosophy, great enlargement would be given to the understanding by going through a Kantean dictionary, well explained and well illustrated.* This terminology, therefore, was useful: 1. As a means to an end (being part of the system); 2.

* In some cases it is true that the construction of the ideas is posterior to the system, and presupposes a knowledge of it, rather than precedes it; but this is not generally true.

As an end in itself. So much for the uses. As to the power of mind put forth in constructing it (between which and the uses lies the valuation of Kant's service; for, if no uses, then we do not thank him for any difficulty he may have overcome; if no difficulty overcome, then we do not ascribe as a merit to him any uses which may flow from it),—as to the power of mind put forth in constructing it, I do not think it likely that you will make the same mistake which I have heard from some unreflecting persons, and which, in fact, lurks at the bottom of much that has been written against Kant's obscurity, as though Kant had done no more than impose new names. Certainly, if that were all, the merit would not be very conspicuous. It would cost little effort of mind to say, Let this be A, and that be D: let this notion be called *transcendent*, and that be called *transcendental*. Such a statement, however, supposes the ideas to be already known and familiar, and simply to want names. In this lies the blunder. When Kant assigned the names, he created the ideas; that is, he drew them within the consciousness. In assigning to the complex notion X the name *transcendental*, Kant was not simply transferring a word which had previously been used by the schoolmen to a more useful office; he was bringing into the service of the intellect a new birth; that is, drawing into a synthesis, which had not existed before *as* a synthesis, parts or elements which exist and come forward hourly in every man's mind. I urge this upon your attention, because you will often hear such challenges thrown out as this (or others involving the same error), "Now, if there be any sense in this Mr. Kant's writings, let us have it in good old mother English." That is, in other words, transfer into the unscientific language of life scientific notions and relations which it is not fitted

to express. The challenger proceeds upon the common error of supposing all ideas fully developed to exist *in esse* in all understandings, *ergo*, in his own; and all that are in his own he thinks that we can express in English. Thus the challenger, on his notions, has you in a dilemma, at any rate; for, if you do not translate it, then it confirms his belief that the whole is jargon; if you *do* (as, doubtless, with the help of much periphrasis, you may translate it into English, that will be intelligible to a man who already understands the philosophy), then where was the use of the new terminology? But the way to deal with this fellow is as follows: My good sir, I shall do what you ask; but, before I do it, I beg that you will oblige me by—1. Translating this mathematics into the language of chemistry; 2. By translating this chemistry into the language of mathematics; 3. Both into the language of cookery; and, finally, solve me the Cambridge problem, "Given the captain's name, and the year of our Lord, to determine the longitude of the ship." This is the way to deal with such fellows.

The terminology of Kant, then, is not a rebaptism of ideas already existing in the universal consciousness; it is in part an enlargement of the understanding by new territory (of which I have spoken), and in part a better regulation of its old territory. This regulation is either negative, and consists in limiting more accurately the boundary-line of conceptions that had hitherto been imperfectly defined; or it is positive, and consists in the substitutions of names which express the relations and dependencies of the object*

* In a conversation which I once had with the late Bishop of Llandaff, on the subject of Kant, he objected chiefly to the terminology, and assigned as one instance of what seemed to him needless innovations, the word *apperception*. "If this word means self-con-

(*termini organici*) for the conventional names which have arisen from accident, and do *not* express those relations (*termini bruti*). It is on this principle that the nomenclature of chemistry is constructed: substances that were before known by arbitrary and non-significant names are now known by systematic names; that is, such as express their relations to other parts of the system. In this way a terminology becomes, in a manner, organic; and, being itself a product of an advanced state of the science, is an important re-agent for facilitating further advances.

These are the benefits of a sound terminology; to which let me add, that no improved terminology can ever be invented—nay, hardly any plausible one—which does not pre-suppose an improved theory. Now, surely benefits such as these ought to outweigh any offence to the ears or the taste, if there were any. But the elegance of coherency is the sole elegance which a terminology needs to possess, or indeed can possess. The understanding is, in this case, the arbiter; and where *that* approves, it must be a misplaced fastidiousness of feeling which does not submit itself to the presiding faculty. As an instance of a repulsive terminology, I would cite that of Aristotle, which has something harsh and technical in it that prevents it from ever blending with the current of ordinary language; even to this,

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sciousness," said he, "I do not see why Mr. Kant might not have contented himself with what contented his father." But the truth is, that this word exactly illustrates the explanation made above; it expresses one fact in a system *sub ratione*, and with a retrospect to another. This would have been the apology for the word: however, in this particular instance, I chose rather to apologize for Kant, by alleging that Wolff and Leibnitz had used the word; so that it was an established word before the birth of the transcendental philosophy, and it might, therefore, be doubted whether Mr. Kant, senior, *had* contented himself in this case with less than Mr. Kant, junior.

however, so far as it answers its purposes, the mind soon learns to reconcile itself. But here, as in other more important points, the terminology of Kant is advantageously distinguished from the Aristotelian, by adapting itself with great ductility to any variety of structure and arrangement incident to a philosophic diction.

I have spoken so much at length on the subject of Kant's terminology, because this is likely to be the first stumbling-block to the student of his philosophy; and because it has been in fact the main subject of attack amongst those who have noticed it in this country; if *that* can be called attack which proceeds in acknowledged ignorance of the original works.

A much more serious attack upon Kant has been the friendly notice of Madame de Staël. The sources from which she drew her opinions were understood to be the two Schlegels, and, probably, M. Dégérando. Like some countrymen of Kant's (*e.g.* Kiesewetter), she has contrived to translate his philosophy into a sense which leaves it tolerably easy to apprehend; but unfortunately at the expense of all definite purpose, applicability, or philosophic meaning. On the other hand, Mr. Coleridge, whose great philosophic powers and undoubted acquaintance with the works of Kant would have fitted him beyond any man to have explained them to the English student, has unfortunately too little talent for teaching or communicating any sort of knowledge, and apparently too little simplicity of mind or zealous desire to do so. Hence it has happened that, so far from assisting Kant's progress in this country, Mr. Coleridge must have retarded it by expounding the oracle in words of more Delphic obscurity than the German original could have presented to the immaturest student. It is, moreover, characteristic of Mr. Coleridge's mind that it never gives back

anything as it receives it. All things are modified and altered in passing through his thoughts; and from this cause, I believe, combined with his aversion to continuous labour, arises his indisposition to mathematics; for *that* he must be content to take as he finds it. Now, this indocility of mind greatly unfits a man to be the faithful expounder of a philosophic system; and it has, in fact, led Mr. Coleridge to make various misrepresentations of Kant; one only, as it might indispose you to pay any attention to Kant, I shall notice. In one of his works he has ascribed to Kant the foppery of an exoteric and an esoteric doctrine; and that upon grounds wholly untenable. The direct and simple-minded Kant, I am persuaded, would have been more shocked at this suspicion than any other with which he could have been loaded.

I throw the following remarks together as tending to correct some of the deepest errors with which men come to the examination of philosophic systems, whether as students or as critics.

1. A good terminology will be one of the first results from a good theory; and hence, though a coherent terminology is not a sufficient evidence in favour of a system, the absence of such a terminology is a sufficient evidence against it.

2. It is asked which is the true philosophy. But this is not the just way of putting the question. The purpose of philosophy is not so much to accumulate positive truths in the first place, as to rectify the position of the human mind, and to correct its mode of seeing. The progress of the human species in this path is not direct, but oblique. One philosophy does not differ from another solely by the amount of truth and error which it brings forward; there is none which has ever had much interest for the human

mind but will be found to contain some truth of importance, or some approximation to it. One philosophy has differed from another rather by the station it has taken, and the aspect under which it has contemplated its object.

3. It has been objected to Kant, by some critics in this country, that his doctrines are, in some instances, reproductions only of doctrines brought forward by other philosophers. The instances alleged have been very unfortunate; but, doubtless, whatsoever truth is contained (according to the last remark) in the erroneous systems, and sometimes in the very errors themselves of the human mind, will be gathered up in its progress by the true system. Where the erroneous path has wandered in all directions, has returned upon itself perpetually, and crossed the field of inquiry with its mazes in every direction, doubtless the path of truth will often intersect it, and perhaps for a short distance coincide with it; but that in this coincidence it receives no impulse or determination from that with which it coincides, will appear from the self-determining force which will soon carry it out of the same direction as inevitably as it entered it.

4. The test of a great philosophical system is often falsely conceived. Men fancy a certain number of great outstanding problems of the highest interest to human nature, upon which every system is required to try its strength; and *that* will be the true one, they think, which solves them all; and *that* the best approximation to the true one which solves most. But this is a most erroneous way of judging. True philosophy will often have occasion to show that these supposed problems are no problems at all, but mere impositions of the mind upon itself, arising out of its unrectified position—errors grounded upon errors. A much better test of a sound philosophy than the number of

the pre-existing problems which it solves will be the quality of those which it proposes. By raising the station of the spectator, it will bring a region of new inquiry within his view; and the very faculty of comprehending these questions will often depend on the station from which they are viewed. For, as the earlier and ruder problems that stimulate human curiosity often turn out baseless and unreal, so again the higher order of problems will be incomprehensible to the undisciplined understanding. This is a fact which should never be lost sight of by those who presume upon their natural and uncultivated powers of mind to judge of Kant, Plato, or any other great philosopher.

5. But the most general error which I have ever met with, as a ground for unreasonable expectations in reference not to Kant only, but to all original philosophers, is the persuasion which men have that their understandings contain already in full development all the notions which any philosophy can demand; and this not from any vanity, but from pure misconception. Hence they naturally think that all which the philosopher has to do is to point to the elements of the knowledge as they exist ready prepared, and forthwith the total knowledge of the one is transferred to any other mind. Watch the efforts of any man to master a new doctrine in philosophy, and you will find that involuntarily he addresses himself to the mere dialectic labour of transposing, dissolving, and re-combining, the notions which he already has. But it is not thus that any very important truth can be developed in the mind. New matter is wanted as well as new form. And the most important remark which I can suggest as a caution to those who approach a great system of philosophy as if it were a series of riddles and their answers, is this: No complex or very important truth was ever yet transferred in full develop-

ment from one mind to another. Truth of that character is not a piece of furniture to be shifted; it is a seed which must be sown, and pass through the several stages of growth. No doctrine of importance can be transferred in a matured shape into any man's understanding from without: it must arise by an act of genesis within the understanding itself.

With this remark I conclude; and am, most truly yours.

ORTHOGRAPHIC MUTINEERS.

WITH A SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
THE WORKS OF WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

As we are all of us crazy when the wind sits in some particular quarter, let not Mr. Landor be angry with me for suggesting that he is outrageously crazy upon the one solitary subject of spelling. It occurs to me, as a plausible solution of his fury upon this point, that perhaps in his earliest school-days, when it is understood that he was exceedingly pugnacious, he may have detested spelling, and (like Roberte the Deville*) have found it more satisfactory for all parties, that when the presumptuous schoolmaster differed from him on the spelling of a word, the question between them should be settled by a stand-up fight. Both parties would have the victory at times; and if, according

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* "*Roberte the Deville*:"—See the old metrical romance of that name: it belongs to the fourteenth century, and was printed some thirty years ago, with wood engravings of the illuminations. Roberte, however, took the liberty of murdering *his* schoolmaster. But could he well do less? Being a reigning Duke's son, and after the rebellious schoolmaster had said—

"*Sir, ye bee too bolde:*
And therewith tooke a rodde hym for to chaste."

Upon which the meek Robin, without using any bad language as the schoolmaster had done, simply took out a long dagger "*hym for to chaste,*" which he did effectually. The schoolmaster gave no bad language after that.

to Pope's expression, "justice rul'd the ball," the schoolmaster (who is always a villain) would be floored three times out of four; no great matter whether wrong or not upon the immediate point of spelling discussed. It is in this way, viz., from the irregular adjudications upon litigated spelling, which must have arisen under such a mode of investigating the matter, that we account for Mr. Landor's being sometimes in the right, but too often (with regard to long words) egregiously in the wrong. As he grew stronger and taller, he would be coming more and more amongst polysyllables, and more and more would be getting the upper hand of the schoolmaster; so that at length he would have it all his own way; one round would decide the turn-up; and thenceforwards his spelling would become frightful. Now, I myself detested spelling as much as all people ought to do, except Continental compositors, who have extra fees for doctoring the lame spelling of ladies and gentlemen. But, unhappily, I had no power to thump the schoolmaster into a conviction of his own absurdities; which, however, I greatly desired to do. Still, my nature, powerless at that time for any active recusancy, was strong for passive resistance; and *that* is the hardest to conquer. I took one lesson of this infernal art, and then declined ever to take a second; and, in fact, I never *did*. Well I remember that unique morning's experience. It was the first page of Entick's Dictionary that I had to get by heart—a sweet sentimental task; and not, as may be fancied, the spelling only, but the horrid attempts of this dep aved Entick to explain the supposed meaning of words that probably had none; many of these, it is my belief, Entick himself forged. Among the strange, grim-looking words, to whose acquaintance I was introduced on that unhappy morning, were *abalienate* and *ablaqueation*—

most respectable words, I am fully persuaded, but so exceedingly retired in their habits, that I never once had the honour of meeting either of them in any book, pamphlet, journal, whether in prose or numerous verse, though haunting such society myself all my life. I also formed the acquaintance, at that time, of the word *abacus*, which, as a Latin word, I have often used, but as an English one, I really never had occasion to spell, until this very moment. Yet, after all, what harm comes of such obstinate recusancy against orthography? I was an "occasional conformist;" I conformed for one morning, and never more. But, for all that, I spell as well as my neighbours; and I can spell *ablaqueation* besides, which I suspect that some of them can *not*.

My own spelling, therefore, went right, because I was left to nature, with strict neutrality on the part of the authorities. Mr. Landor's too often went wrong, because he was thrown into a perverse channel by his continued triumphs over the prostrate schoolmaster. To toss up, as it were, for the spelling of a word, by the best of nine rounds, inevitably left the impression that chance governed all; and this accounts for the extreme capriciousness of Landor.

It is a work for a separate dictionary in quarto to record *all* the proposed revolutions in spelling, through which our English blood, either at home or in America, has thrown off, at times, the surplus energy that consumed it. I conceive this to be a sort of cutaneous affection, like nettle-rash, or ring-worm, through which the patient gains relief for his own nervous distraction, whilst, in fact, he does no harm to anybody: for usually he forgets his own reforms, and if *he* should not, everybody else *does*. Not to travel back into the seventeenth century, and the noble army of

short-hand writers who have all made war upon orthography, for secret purposes of their own, even in the last century, and in the present, what a list of eminent rebels against the spelling-book might be called up to answer for their wickedness at the bar of the Old Bailey, if anybody would be kind enough to make it a felony! Cowper, for instance, too modest and too pensive to raise upon any subject an open standard of rebellion, yet, in quiet Olney, made a small *émeute* as to the word "Grecian." Everybody else was content with one "*e*;" but he, recollecting the cornucopia of *es*, which Providence had thought fit to empty upon the mother word *Greece*, deemed it shocking to disinherit the poor child of its hereditary wealth, and wrote it, therefore, *Greecian* throughout his Homer. Such a modest reform the sternest old Tory could not find in his heart to denounce. But some contagion must have collected about this word *Greece;* for the next man, who had much occasion to use it—viz., Mitford*—who wrote that "History

* Mitford, who was the brother of a man better known than himself to the public eye, viz., Lord Redesdale, may be considered a very unfortunate author. His work upon Greece, which Lord Byron celebrated for its "wrath and its partiality," really had those merits: choleric it was in excess, and as entirely partial, as nearly perfect ir its injustice, as human infirmity would allow. Nothing is truly perfect in this shocking world; absolute injustice, alas! the perfection of wrong must not be looked for until we reach some high Platonic form of polity. Then shall we revel and bask in a vertical sun of iniquity. Meantime, I *will* say—that to satisfy all bilious and unreasonable men, a better historian of Greece than Mitford could not be fancied. And yet, at the very moment when he was stepping into his harvest of popularity, down comes one of those omnivorous Germans that, by reading everything and a trifle besides, contrive to throw really learned men—and perhaps better thinkers than themselves—into the shade. Ottfried Müller, with other archæologists and travellers into Hellas, gave new aspects to the very purposes of Grecian history. Do you hear, reader? not new answers, but new

of Greece" so eccentric, and so eccentrically praised by Lord Byron, absolutely took to spelling like a heathen, slashed right and left against decent old English words, until, in fact, the whole of Entick's Dictionary (*ablaqueation* and all) was ready to swear the peace against him. Mitford, in course of time, slept with his fathers; his grave, I trust, not haunted by the injured words whom he had tomahawked; and, at this present moment, the Bishop of St. David's reigneth in his stead. His Lordship, bound over to episcopal decorum, has hitherto been sparing in his assaults upon pure old English words; but one may trace the insurrectionary taint, passing down from Cowper through the word *Grecian*, in many of his Anglo-Hellenic forms. For instance, he insists on our saying—not *Heracleidæ* and *Pelopidæ*, as we all used to do—but *Heracleids* and *Pelopids*. A list of my Lord's barbarities, in many other cases, upon unprotected words, poor shivering aliens that fall into his power, when thrown upon the coast of his diocese, I had—*had*, I say, for, alas! *fuit Ilium*.

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questions. And Mitford, that was gradually displacing the unlearned Gillies, &c., was himself displaced by those who intrigued with Germany. His other work on "The Harmony of Language," though one of the many that attempted, and the few that accomplished, the distinction between accent and quantity, or learnedly appreciated the metrical science of Milton, was yet, in my hearing, pronounced utterly unintelligible, by the best *practical* commentator on Milton, viz., the best reproducer of his exquisite effects in blank verse that any generation since Milton has been able to show. Mr. Mitford was one of the many accomplished scholars that are ill used. Had he possessed the splendid powers of the Landor, he would have raised a clatter on the armour of modern society, such as Samson threatened to the giant Harapha. For, in many respects, he resembled Landor: he had much of his learning—he had the same extensive access to books and influential circles in great cities—the same gloomy disdain of popular falsehoods or common-places—and the same disposition to run a-muck against all nations, languages, and spelling-books.

Yet, really, one is ashamed to linger on cases so mild as those, coming, as one does, in the order of atrocity, to Elphinstone, to Noah Webster, a Yankee—which word means, not an American, but that separate order of Americans, growing in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, or Connecticut, in fact, a New Englander*—and to the rabid Ritson. Noah would naturally have reduced us all to an antediluvian simplicity. Shem, Ham, and Japhet, probably separated in consequence of perverse varieties in spelling; so that orthographical unity might seem to him one condition for preventing national schisms. But as to the rabid Ritson, who can describe his vagaries? What great arithmetician can furnish an index to his absurdities, or what great decipherer furnish a key to the principles of these absurdities? In his very title-pages, nay, in the most obstinate of ancient technicalities, he showed his cloven foot to the astonished reader. Some of his many works were printed in *Pall-Mall;* now, as the world is pleased to pronounce that word *Pel-Mel*, thus and no otherwise (said Ritson) it shall be spelled for ever. Whereas, on the contrary, some men would have said: The spelling is well enough, it is the public pronunciation which is wrong. This ought to be *Paul-Maul;* or, perhaps—agreeably to the sound which we give to the *a* in such words as *what, quantity, want*—still better, and with more gallantry, *Poll-Moll.* The word Mr., again, in Ritson's reformation, must have astonished the Post-office. He insisted that this cabalistical-looking form,

* "*In fact, a New Englander.*"—This explanation, upon a matter familiar to the well-informed, it is proper to repeat occasionally, because we English exceedingly perplex and confound the Americans by calling, for instance, a Virginian or a Kentuck by the name of Yankee, whilst that term was originally introduced as antithetic to these more southern States.

which might as reasonably be translated into *monster*, was a direct fraud on the national language, quite as bad as clipping the Queen's coinage. How, then, *should* it be written? Reader! reader! that you will ask such a question! *mister*, of course; and mind that you put no capital *m*; unless, indeed, you are speaking of some great gun, some mister of misters, such as Mr. Pitt of old, or perhaps a reformer of spelling. The plural, again, of such words as *romance*, *age*, *horse*, he wrote *romanceës*, *ageës*, *horseës*; and upon the following equitable consideration, that, inasmuch as the *e* final in the singular is mute, that is, by a general vote of the nation has been allowed to retire upon a superannuation allowance, it is abominable to call it back upon active service—like the modern Chelsea pensioners—as must be done, if it is to bear the whole weight of a separate syllable like *ces*. Consequently, if the nation and Parliament mean to keep faith, they are bound to hire a stout young *e* to run in the traces with the old original *e*, taking the whole work off his aged shoulders. Volumes would not suffice to exhaust the madness of Ritson upon this subject. And there was this peculiarity in his madness, over and above its clamorous ferocity, that being no classical scholar (a meagre self-taught Latinist, and no Grecian at all), though profound as a black-letter scholar, he cared not one straw for ethnographic relations of words, nor for unity of analogy, which are the principles that generally have governed reformers of spelling. He was an attorney, and moved constantly under the *monomaniac* idea that an action lay on behalf of misused letters, mutes, liquids, vowels, and diphthongs, against somebody or other (John Doe, was it, or Richard Roe?) for trespass on any rights of theirs which an attorney might trace, and of course for any direct outrage upon their persons. Yet no

man was more systematically an offender in both ways than himself; tying up one leg of a quadruped word, and forcing it to run upon three; cutting off noses and ears, if he fancied that equity required it: and living in eternal hot water with a language which he pretended eternally to protect.

And yet all these fellows were nothing in comparison of Mr. Pinkerton.* The most of these men did but ruin the national *spelling;* but Pinkerton—the monster Pinkerton—proposed a revolution which would have left us nothing to spell. It is almost incredible—if a book regularly printed and published, bought and sold, did not remain to attest the fact—that this horrid barbarian seriously proposed, as a glorious discovery for refining our language, the following plan:—All people were content with the compass of the English language: its range of expression was equal to anything; but, unfortunately, as compared with the sweet orchestral languages of the south—Spanish the stately, and Italian the lovely—it wanted rhythmus and melody. Clearly, then, the one supplementary grace, which it remained for modern art to give, is that every one should add at discretion *o* and *a, ino* and *ano,* to the end of the English words. The language, in its old days, should be taught *struttare struttissimamente.* As a specimen, Mr. Pinkerton favoured us with his own version of a famous passage in Addison, viz., "The Vision of Mirza." The pas-

* Pinkerton published one of his earliest volumes, under this title—"Rimes, by Mr. Pinkerton," not having the fear of Ritson before his eyes. And, for once, we have reason to thank Ritson for his remark—that the form Mr. might just as well be read *Monster.* Pinkerton in this point was a perfect monster. As to the word *Rimes,* instead of *Rhymes,* he had something to stand upon; the Greek *rythmos* was certainly the remote fountain, but the proximate fountain must have been the Italian *rima.*

sage, which begins thus, "As I sat on the top of a rock," being translated into, "As I satto on the toppino of a rocko," &c. But *luckilissime* this *proposalio* of the *absurdissimo Pinkertonio* was not *adaptado* by *anybody-ini whatever-ano.**

Mr. Landor is more learned, and probably more consistent in his assaults upon the established spelling than most of these elder reformers. But *that* does not make him either learned enough or consistent enough. He never ascends into Anglo-Saxon, or the many cognate languages of the Teutonic family, which is indispensable to a searching inquest upon our language; he does not put forward in this direction even the slender qualifications of Horne Tooke. But Greek and Latin are quite unequal, when disjoined from the elder wheels in our etymological system, to the working of the total machinery of the English language. Mr. Landor proceeds upon no fixed principles in his changes. Sometimes it is on the principle of internal analogy with its roots; sometimes on the principle of euphony, or of metrical convenience. Even within such principles he is not uniform. All well-built English scholars, for instance, know that the word *feälty* cannot be made into a dissyllable: trissyllabic it ever wast† with the elder poets—Spenser, Milton, &c.; and so it is amongst all the

* The most extravagant of all experiments on language is brought forward in the "*Letters of Literature*, by Robert Heron." But Robert Heron is a *pseudonyme* for John Pinkerton; and I have been told that Pinkerton's motive for assuming it was—because *Heron* had been the maiden name of his mother. Poor lady, she would have stared to find herself, in old age, transformed into Mistressina Heronilla. What most amuses one in pursuing the steps of such an attempt at refinement, is its reception by 'Jack' in the navy.

† "*It ever was*"—and, of course, being (as there is no need to tell Mr. Landor) a form obtained by contraction from *fidelitas*.

modern poets who have taken any pains with their English studies: *e. g.*

> "The eagle, lord of land and sea,
> Stoop'd down—to pay him fe-al-ty."

It is dreadful to hear a man say *feal-ty* in any case; but here it is luckily impossible. Now, Mr. Landor generally is correct, and trisects the word; but once at least he bisects it. I complain, besides, that Mr. Landor, in urging the authority of Milton for orthographic innovations, does not always distinguish as to Milton's motives. It is true, as he contends, that in some instances, Milton reformed the spelling in obedience to the Italian precedent: and certainly without blame; as in *sovran*, *sdeign*, which ought not to be printed (as it is) with an elision before the *s*, as if short for disdain; but in other instances Milton's motive had no reference to etymology. Sometimes it was this. In Milton's day, the modern use of italics was nearly unknown. Everybody is aware that, in our authorized version of the Bible, published in Milton's infancy, italics are never once used for the purpose of emphasis—but exclusively to indicate such words or auxiliary forms as, though implied and *virtually* present in the original, are not textually expressed, but must be so in English, from the different genius of the language.*

* Of this a ludicrous illustration is mentioned by the writer once known to the public as *Trinity Jones*. Some young clergyman, unacquainted with the technical use of italics by the original compositors of James the First's Bible, on coming to 1 Kings xiii. 27, "And he," (viz. the old prophet of Bethel), "spake to his sons, saying, Saddle me the ass. And they saddled *him*;" (where the italic *him* simply meant that this word was involved, but not expressed, in the original), read it, "And they saddled HIM;" as though these undutiful sons, instead of saddling the donkey, had saddled the old prophet. In fact, the old gentleman's directions are not quite without an opening for a filial misconception, if the reader examines them as closely as I examine words.

Now, this want of a proper technical resource amongst the compositors of the age, for indicating a peculiar stress upon a word, evidently drove Milton into some perplexity for a compensatory contrivance. It was unusually requisite for *him*, with his elaborate metrical system and his divine ear, to have an art for throwing attention upon his accents, and upon his muffling of accents. When, for instance, he wishes to direct a bright jet of emphasis upon the possessive pronoun *their*, he writes it as we now write it. But, when he wishes to take off the accent, he writes it *thir*.* Like Ritson, he writes *therefor* and *wherefor* without the final *e;* not regarding the analogy, but singly the metrical quantity: for it was shocking to his classical feeling that a sound so short to the ear should be represented to the eye by so long a combination as *fore;* and the more so, because uneducated people did then, and do now, often equilibrate the accent between the two syllables, or rather make the *quantity* long in both syllables, whilst giving an overbalance of the *accent* to the last. The *Paradise Lost*, being printed during Milton's blindness, did not receive the full and consistent benefit of his spelling reforms, which (as I have contended) certainly arose partly in the imperfections of typography in that era: but such changes as had happened most to impress his ear with a sense of their importance, he took a special trouble, even under all the disadvantages of his darkness, to have rigorously adopted. He must have astonished the compositors, though not quite so much as the tiger-cat Ritson or the Mr. (viz. monster) Pinkerton—each after *his* kind—astonished *their* compositors.

* He uses this and similar artifices, in fact, as the damper in a modern pianoforte, for modifying the swell of the intonation.

But the caprice of Mr. Landor is shown most of all upon Greek names. *Nous autres* say "Aristotle," and are quite content with it, until we migrate into some extra-superfine world; but this title will not do for *him*: "Aristotles" it must be. And why so? Because, answers the Landor, if once I consent to say Aristotle, then I am pledged to go the whole hog; and perhaps the next man I meet is Empedocles, whom, in that case, I must call him Empedocle. Well, do so. *Call* him Empedocle; it will not break his back, which seems broad enough. But, now, mark the contradictions in which Mr. Landor is soon landed. He says, as everybody says, Terence and not Terentius, Horace and not Horatius; but he must leave off such horrid practices, because he dares not call Lucretius by the analogous name of Lucrece, since *that* would be putting a she instead of a he; nor Propertius by the name of Properce, because *that* would be speaking French instead of English. Next he says, and continually he says, Virgil for Virgilius. But, on that principle he ought to say Valer for Valerius; and yet again he ought *not*; because, as he says Tully and not Tull for Tullius, so also he is bound in Christian equity, to say Valery for Valer; but he cannot say either Valer or Valery. So here we are in a mess. Thirdly, I charge him with saying Ovid for Ovidius; which *I* do, which everybody does, but which *he* must not do: for, if he means to persist in *that*, then, upon his own argument from analogy, he must call Didius Julianus by the shocking name of *Did*, which is the same thing as Tit—since T is D soft. Did was a very great man indeed, and for a very short time indeed. Probably Did was the only man that ever bade for an empire, and no mistake, at a public auction. Think of Did's bidding for the Roman empire: nay, think also of Did's having the lot actually knocked down to him; and

of Did's going home to dinner with the lot in his pocket. It makes one perspire to think that, if the reader or myself had been living at that time, and had been prompted by some whim within us to bid against him—that is, he or I—should actually have come down to posterity by the abominable name of Anti-Did. All of us in England say Livy when speaking of the great historian, not Livius. Yet Livius Andronicus it would be impossible to indulge with that brotherly name of Livy. Marcus Antonius is called—not by Shakspere only, but by all the world—Mark Anthony; but who is it that ever called Marcus Brutus by the affectionate name of Mark Brute? "Keep your distance," we say, to that very doubtful brute, "and expect no pet names from us." Finally, apply the principle of abbreviation, involved in the names Pliny, Livy, Tully, all substituting *y* for *ius*, to Marius—that grimmest of grim visions that rises up to us from the phantasmagoria of Roman history. Figure to yourself, reader, that truculent face, trenched and scarred with hostile swords, carrying thunder in its ominous eye-brows, and frightening armies a mile off with its scowl, being saluted by the tenderest of feminine names, as "My Mary."

Not only, therefore, is Mr. Landor inconsistent in these innovations, but the innovations themselves, supposing them all harmonized and established, would but plough up the landmarks of old hereditary feelings. We learn oftentimes, by a man's bearing a good-natured sobriquet amongst his comrades, that he is a kind-hearted, social creature, popular with them all! And it is an illustration of the same tendency, that the scale of popularity for the classical authors amongst our fathers, is registered tolerably well, in a gross general way, by the difference between having and *not* having a familiar name. If we except the first Cæsar,

the mighty Caius Julius, who was too majestic to invite familiarity, though too gracious to have repelled it, there is no author whom our forefathers loved, but has won a sort of Christian name in the land. Homer, and Hesiod, and Pindar, we all say; we cancel the alien *us;* but we never say Theocrit for Theocritus. Anacreon remains rigidly Grecian marble; but *that* is only because his name is not of a plastic form—else everybody loves the sad old fellow. The same bar to familiarity existed in the names of the tragic poets, except perhaps for Æschylus; who, however, like Cæsar, is too awful for a caressing name. But Roman names were, generally, more flexible. Livy and Sallust have ever been favourites with men; Livy with everybody; Sallust, in a degree that may be called extravagant, with many celebrated Frenchmen, as the President des Brosses, and in our own days with M. Lerminier, a most eloquent and original writer (*Etudes Historiques*); and two centuries ago, with the greatest of men, John Milton, in a degree that seems to me absolutely mysterious. These writers are baptized into our society—have gained a settlement in our parish; when you call a man Jack, and not Mr. John, it's plain you like him. But, as to the gloomy Tacitus, our fathers liked him not. He was too vinegar a fellow for them; nothing hearty or genial about him; he thought ill of everybody; and we all suspect that, for those times, he was perhaps the worst of the bunch himself. Accordingly, this Tacitus, because he remained so perfectly tacit for our jolly old forefathers' ears, never slipped into the name Tacit for their mouths; nor ever will, I predict, for the mouths of posterity. Coming to the Roman poets, I must grant that three great ones, viz., Lucretius, Statius, and Valerius Flaccus, have not been complimented with the freedom of our city, as they should

have been, in a gold box. I regret, also, the ill fortune, in this respect, of Catullus, if he was really the author of that grand headlong dithyrambic, the Atys: he certainly ought to have been ennobled by the title of Catull. Looking to very much of his writings, much more I regret the case of Plautus: and I am sure that if her Majesty would warrant his bearing the name and arms of *Plaut* in all time coming, it would gratify many of us. As to the rest, or those that anybody cares about, Horace, Virgil, Ovid, Lucan, Martial, Claudian, all have been raised to the peerage. Ovid was the great poetic favourite of Milton; and not without a philosophic ground: his festal gaiety, and the brilliant velocity of his *aurora borealis* intellect, forming a deep natural equipoise to the mighty gloom and solemn planetary movement in the mind of the other; like the wedding of male and female counterparts. Ovid was, therefore, rightly Milton's favourite. But the favourite of all the world is Horace. Were there ten peerages, were there three blue ribbons, vacant, he ought to have them all.

Besides, if Mr. Landor could issue decrees, and even harmonize his decrees for reforming our Anglo-Grecian spelling—decrees which no Council of Trent could execute, without first rebuilding the Holy Office of the Inquisition—still there would be little accomplished. The names of all continental Europe are often in confusion, from different causes, when Anglicised: German names are rarely spelled rightly by the *laity* of our isle: Polish and Hungarian never. Many foreign towns have in England what botanists would call *trivial* names; Leghorn, for instance, Florence, Madrid, Lisbon, Vienna, Munich, Antwerp, Brussels, the Hague—all unintelligible names to the savage Continental native. Then, if Mr. Landor reads as much of Anglo-Indian

books as I do, he must be aware that, for many years back, they have all been at sixes and sevens; so that now most Hindoo words are in masquerade, and we shall soon require *English* pundits in Leadenhall Street.* How does he like, for instance, *Sipahee* the modern form for *Sepoy?* or *Tepheen* for *Tiffin?* At this rate of metamorphosis, absorbing even the consecrated names of social meals, we shall soon cease to understand what that *disjune* was which his sacred Majesty graciously accepted at Tillietudlem. But even elder forms of oriental speech are as little harmonized in Christendom. A few leagues of travelling make the Hebrew unintelligible to us; and the Bible becomes a Delphic mystery to Englishmen amongst the countrymen of Luther; Solomon is there called Salamo; Samson is called Simson, though probably he never published an edition of Euclid. Nay, even in this native isle of ours, you may be at cross purposes on the Bible with your own brother. I am, myself, next door neighbour to Westmoreland, being

* The reasons for this anarchy in the naturalization of Eastern words are to be sought in three causes: 1. In national rivalships: French travellers in India, like Jacquemont, &c., as they will not adopt our English First Meridian, will not, of course, adopt our English spelling. In one of Paul Richter's novels a man assumes the First Meridian to lie generally, not through Greenwich, but through his own skull, and always through his own study. I have myself long suspected the Magnetic Pole to lie under a friend's wine-cellar, from the vibrating movement which I have remarked constantly going on in his cluster of keys towards that particular point. Really, the French, like Sir Anthony Absolute, must "get an atmosphere of their own," such is their hatred to holding anything in common with us. 2. They are to be sought in local *Indian* differences of pronunciation. 3. In the variety of our own British population—soldiers, missionaries, merchants, who are unlearned or half-learned—scholars, really learned, but often fantastically learned, and lastly (as you may swear) young ladies—anxious, above all things, to mystify us outside barbarians.

a Lancashire man; and, one day, I was talking with a Westmoreland farmer, whom, of course, I ought to have understood very well; but I had no chance with him: for I could not make out who that *No* was, concerning *whom* or concerning *which*, he persisted in talking. It seemed to me, from the context, that *No* must be a man, and by no means a chair; but so very negative a name, you perceive, furnished no positive hints for solving the problem. I said as much to the farmer, who stared in stupefaction. "What," cried he, "did a far-larn'd man, like you, fresh from Oxford, never hear of *No*, an old gentleman that should have been drowned, but was *not*, when all his folk were drowned?" "Never, so help me Jupiter," was my reply: "never heard of him to this hour, any more than of *Yes*, an old gentleman that should have been hanged, but was *not*, when all his folk were hanged. *Populous No*—I had read of in the Prophets; but that was *not* an old gentleman." It turned out that the farmer and all his compatriots in bonny Martindale had been taught at the parish school to rob the patriarch Noah of one clear moiety appertaining in fee simple to that ancient name. But afterwards I found that the farmer was not so entirely absurd as he had seemed. The Septuagint, indeed, is clearly against him; for *there*, as plain as a pike-staff, the farmer might have read Νωε. But, on the other hand, Pope, not quite so great a scholar as he was a poet, yet still a fair one, *always* made Noah into a monosyllable; and that seems to argue an old English usage; though I really believe Pope's reason for adhering to such an absurdity was with a prospective view to the rhymes *blow*, or *row*, or *stow* (an important idea to the Ark), which struck him as *likely* words, in case of any call for writing about Noah.

The long and the short of it is—that the whole world

lies in heresy or schism on the subject of orthography. All climates alike groan under heterography. It is absolutely of no use to begin with one's own grandmother in such labours of reformation. It is toil thrown away: and as nearly a hopeless task as the proverb insinuates that it is to attempt a reformation in that old lady's mode of eating eggs. She laughs at one. She has a vain conceit that she is able, out of her own proper resources, to do both, viz., the spelling and the eating of the eggs. And all that remains for philosophers, like Mr. Landor and myself, is—to turn away in sorrow rather than in anger, dropping a silent tear for the poor old lady's infatuation.

JOHN PAUL FREDERICK RICHTER.

GRASMERE, OCT. 18, 1821.

MY DEAR F.—You ask me to direct you generally in your choice of German authors; secondly, and especially, among those authors to name my favourite. In such an ocean as German literature, your first request is of too wide a compass for a letter; and I am not sorry that, by leaving it untouched, and reserving it for some future conversation, I shall add one *moment* (in the language of dynamics) to the attractions of friendship, and the local attractions of my residence; —insufficient, as it seems, of themselves, to draw you so far northwards from London. Come, therefore, dear F., bring thy ugly countenance to the lakes; and I will engraft such German youth and vigour on thy English trunk, that henceforwards thou shalt bear excellent fruit. I suppose, F., you know that the golden pippin is now almost, if not quite, extinct in England: and why? Clearly from want of some exotic, but congenial inoculation. So it is with literatures of whatsoever land: unless crossed by some other of different breed, they all tend to superannuation. Thence comes it that the French literature is now in the last stage of phthisis—dotage—palsy, or whatever image will best express the most abject state of senile—(senile? no! of anile)—imbecility. Its constitution, as you well know,

was, in its best days, marrowless and without nerve; its youth without hope, and its manhood without dignity. For it is remarkable, that to the French people only, of all nations that have any literature at all, has it been, or can it be, justly objected—that they have "no paramount book;" none, that is to say, which stands out as a monument adequately representative of the intellectual power of a whole nation; none which has attested its own power by influencing the modes of thinking, acting, educating, through a long tract of centuries. They have no book on which the national mind has adequately acted; none, which has re-acted, for any great end, upon the national mind. We English have mighty authors, almost, I might say, almighty authors, in whom (to speak by a scholastic term) the national mind is contained *eminenter*; that is, virtually contained in its principles: and reciprocally, these abstracts of the English mind continue, in spite of many counteracting forces, to mould and modulate the national tone of thought; I do not say *directly*, for you will object that they are not sufficiently studied; but indirectly, inasmuch as the hundreds in every generation, who influence their contemporary millions, have themselves derived an original influence from these books. The planet Jupiter, according to the speculations of a great German philosopher, is just now coming into a habitable condition: its primeval man is, perhaps, now in his Paradise: the history, the poetry, the woes of Jupiter, are now in their cradle. Suppose, then, that this Jovian man were allowed to come down upon our earth, to take an inquest among us, and to call us—nation by nation—to a solemn audit on the question of our intellectual efforts and triumphs. What could the earth say for herself? For our parts, we should take him into Westminster Abbey: and standing upon the ancestral

dust of England, we should present him with two volumes —one containing Hamlet, Lear, and Othello; the other containing Paradise Lost. This, we should say, this is what we have achieved: these are our Pyramids. But what could France present him? and where? Why, her best offering must be presented in a *boudoir:* the impudence even of a Frenchman would not dare to connect the sanctities of religious feeling with any book in his language: the wildest vanity could not pretend to show the correlate of Paradise Lost. To speak in a language suitable to a Jovian visitor, that is, in the language of astronomy, *our* books would appear to him as two heavenly bodies of the first magnitude, whose *period*, the cycle and the revolution of whose orbit, were too vast to be calculated: whilst the very best of France could be regarded as no more than satellites, fitted to move about some central body of insignificant size. Now whence comes this poverty of the French literature? Manifestly hence, that it is too intensely steeped in French manners to admit of any influences from without: it has rejected all alliance with exotic literature; and like some royal families, or like a particular valley in this county, from intermarrying too exclusively in their own narrow circle, it is now on its last legs; and will soon go out like a farthing rushlight.

Having this horrid example before our eyes, what should we English do? Why, evidently we should cultivate an intercourse with that literature of Europe which has most of a juvenile constitution. Now *that* is beyond all doubt the German. I do not so much insist on the present excellence of the German literature (though, poetry apart, the *current* literature of Germany appears to me by much the best in Europe): what weighs most with me is the promise and assurance of future excellence held out by the originality

and masculine strength of thought which has moulded the German mind since the time of Kant. Whatever be thought of the existing authors, it is clear that a mighty power has been at work in the German mind since the French Revolution, which happily coincided in point of time with the influence of Kant's great work.* Change of any kind was good for Germany. One truth was clear—Whatever was, was bad. And the evidence of this appears on the face of the literature. Before 1789, good authors were rare in Germany: since then, they are so numerous, that in any sketch of their literature all individual notice becomes impossible: you must confine yourself to favourite authors, or notice them by classes. And this leads me to your question—Who is *my* favourite author: My answer is, that I have three favourites; and those are Kant, Schiller, and John Paul Richter. But setting Kant aside, as hardly belonging to the *literature*, in the true meaning of that word, I have, you see, two. In what respect there is any affinity between them, I will notice before I conclude. For the present, I shall observe only, that in the case of Schiller, I love his works chiefly because I venerate the memory of the man: whereas, in the case of Richter, my veneration and affection for the man is founded wholly on my knowledge of his works. This distinction will point out Richter as the most eligible *author* for your present purpose. In point of originality, indeed, there cannot arise a question between the pretensions of Richter and those of any other German author whatsoever. He is no man's representative but his own; nor do I think he will

* The *Critik der Reinen Vernunft* was published about five years before the French Revolution, but lay unnoticed in the publisher's warehouse for four or five years.

ever have a successor. Of *his* style of writing, it may be said, with an emphatic and almost exclusive propriety, that except it proceeds in a spirit of perfect freedom, it cannot exist; unless moving from an impulse self-derived, it cannot move at all. What then *is* his style of writing? What are its general characteristics? These I will endeavour to describe with sufficient circumstantiality to meet your present wants: premising only that I call him frequently *John Paul*, without adding his surname, both because all Germany gives him that appellation as an expression of affection for his person, and because he has himself sometimes assumed it in the title-pages of his works.

First.—The characteristic distinction of Paul Richter amongst German authors, I will venture to add amongst modern authors generally, is the two-headed power which he possesses over the pathetic and the humorous; or, rather, let me say at once, what I have often felt to be true, and could (I think) at a fitting opportunity prove to be so, this power is *not* two-headed, but a one-headed Janus with two faces: the pathetic and the humorous are but different phases of the same orb; they assist each other, melt indiscernibly into each other, and often shine each through each like layers of coloured crystals placed one behind another. Take, as an illustration, Mrs. Quickly's account of Falstaff's death. Here there were three things to be accomplished: first, the death of a human being was to be described; of necessity, therefore, to be described pathetically; for death being one of those events which call up the pure generalities of human nature, and remove to the background all individualities, whether of life or character, the mind would not in any case endure to have it treated with levity; so that, if any circumstances of humour are introduced by the

poetic painter, they must be such as will blend and fall into harmony with the ruling passion of the scene: and, by the way, combining it with the fact, that humorous circumstances often *have* been introduced into death-bed scenes, both actual and imaginary,—this remark of itself yields a proof that there *is* a humour which is in alliance with pathos. How else could we have borne the jests of Sir Thomas Moore after his condemnation, which, *as* jests, would have been unseasonable from anybody else: but being felt in him to have a root in his character, they take the dignity of humorous traits; and do, in fact, deepen the pathos. So again, mere *naïveté*, or archness, when it is felt to flow out of the cheerfulness of resignation, becomes humorous, and at the same time becomes pathetic: as, for instance, Lady Jane Grey's remark on the scaffold—"I have but a little neck," &c. But to return: the death of Falstaff, as the death of a man, was, in the first place, to be described with pathos, and if with humour, no otherwise than as the one could be reconciled with the other; but, 2d, it was the death not only of a man, but also of a Falstaff; and we could not but require that the description should revive the image and features of so memorable a character; if not, why describe it at all? The understanding would as little bear to forget that it was the death-bed of a Falstaff, as the heart and affections to forget that it was the death-bed of a fellow-creature. Lastly, the description is given, not by the poet speaking in his own universal language, but by Mrs. Quickly—a character as individually portrayed, and as well known to us, as the subject of her description. Let me recapitulate: 1st, it was to be pathetic, as relating to a man; 2d, humorous, as relating to Falstaff; 3d, humorous in another style, as coming from Mrs. Quickly. These were difficulties rather greater than those of levelling

hills, filling up valleys, and arranging trees, in picturesque groups: yet Capability Brown was allowed to exclaim, on surveying a conquest of his in this walk of art—"Ay! none but your Browns and your G— Almighties can do such things as these." Much more then might this irreverent speech be indulged to the gratitude of our veneration for Shakspere, on witnessing such triumphs of his art. The simple words, "*and a' babbled of green fields*," I should imagine, must have been read by many a thousand with tears and smiles at the same instant; I mean, connecting them with a previous knowledge of Falstaff and of Mrs. Quickly. Such then being demonstrably the possibility of blending, or fusing, as it were, the elements of pathos and of humour—and composing out of their union a third metal *sui generis* (as Corinthian brass, you know, is said to have been the product of all other metals, from the confluence of melted statues, &c., at the burning of Corinth)—I cannot but consider John Paul Richter as by far the most eminent artist in that way since the time of Shakspere. What! you will say, greater than Sterne? I answer *yes*, to my thinking; and I could give some arguments and illustrations in support of this judgment. But I am not anxious to establish my own preference, as founded on anything of better authority than my idiosyncrasy, or more permanent, if you choose to think so, than my own caprice.

Second.—Judge as you will on this last point, that is, on the comparative pretensions of Sterne and Richter to the *spolia opima* in the fields of pathos and of humour; yet in one pretension he not only leaves Sterne at an infinite distance in the rear, but really, for my part, I cease to ask who it is that he leaves behind him, for I begin to think with myself, who it is that he approaches. If a man could

reach Venus or Mercury, we should not say he has advanced to a great distance from the earth: we should say, he is very near to the sun. So also, if in anything a man approaches Shakspere, or does but remind us of him, all other honours are swallowed up in that: a relation of inferiority to him is a more enviable distinction than all degrees of superiority to others, the rear of *his* splendours a more eminent post than the supreme station in the van of all others. I have already mentioned one *quality* of excellence, viz. the interpenetration* of the humorous and the pathetic, common to Shakspere and John Paul: but this, apart from its *quantity* or degree, implies no more of a participation in Shaksperian excellence, than the possession of wit, judgment, good sense, &c., which, in some degree or other, must be common to all authors of any merit at all. Thus far I have already said that I would not contest the point of precedence with the admirers of Sterne: but, in the claim I now advance for Richter, which respects a question of *degree*, I cannot allow of any competition at all from that quarter. What then is it that I claim? Briefly, an activity of understanding, so restless and indefatigable that all attempts to illustrate, or express it adequately by images borrowed from the natural world, from the motions of beasts, birds, insects, &c. from the leaps of tigers or

* "*Interpenetration:*"—this word is from the mint of Mr. Coleridge; and, as it seems to me a very "laudable" word (as surgeons say of *pus*) I mean to patronize it; and beg to recommend it to my friends and the public in general. By the way, the public, of whose stupidity I have often reason to complain, does not seem to understand it. The prefix *inter* has the force of the French *entre*, in such words as *s'entrelacer: reciprocal* penetration is the meaning: as if a black colour should enter a crimson one, yet not keep itself distinct; but, being in turn pervaded by the crimson, each should diffuse itself through the other.

leopards, from the gamboling and tumbling of kittens, the antics of monkeys, or the running of antelopes and ostriches, &c., are baffled, confounded, and made ridiculous by the enormous and overmastering superiority of impression left by the thing illustrated. The rapid, but uniform motions of the heavenly bodies, serve well enough to typify the grand and continuous motions of the Miltonic mind. But the wild, giddy, fantastic, capricious, incalculable, springing, vaulting, tumbling, dancing, waltzing, caprioling, *pirouetting*, sky-rocketing of the chamois, the harlequin, the Vestris, the storm-loving raven—the raven? no, the lark (for often he ascends "singing up to heaven's gates," but like the lark he dwells upon the earth), in short, if the Proteus, the Ariel, the Mercury, the monster—John Paul, can be compared to nothing in heaven or earth, or the waters under the earth, except to the motions of the same faculty as existing in Shakspere. Perhaps, meteorology may hereafter furnish us with some adequate analogon or adumbration of its multitudinous activity: *hereafter*, observe; for, as to lightning, or anything we know at present, it pants after them "in vain," in company with that pursy old gentleman Time, as painted by Dr. Johnson.* To say the truth, John Paul's intellect—his faculty of catching at a glance all the relations of objects, both the grand, the lovely, the ludicrous, and the fantastic—is painfully and almost morbidly active: there is no respite, no repose allowed; no, not for a moment, in some of his works, not whilst you can say *Jack Robinson*. And, by the way, a sort of namesake of this Mr. Robinson, viz. Jack-o'-the-lantern, comes as near to a semblance of

* "And panting Time toil'd after him in vain."

So that, according to the Doctor, Shakspere performed a match against Time; and, being backed by Nature, it seems he won it.

John Paul as anybody I know. Shakspere himself has given us some account of Jack: and I assure you that the same account will serve for Jack Paul Richter. One of his books (*Vorschule der Aesthetik*) is absolutely so surcharged with quicksilver, that I expect to see it leap off the table as often as it is laid there; and therefore, to prevent accidents, I usually load it with the works of our good friend — —, Esq. and F.R.S. In fact, so exuberant is this perilous gas of wit in John Paul, that, if his works do not explode, at any rate, I think John Paul himself will blow up one of these days. It must be dangerous to bring a candle too near him: many persons, especially half-pay officers, have lately "gone off," by inconsiderately blowing out their bed-candle.* They were loaded with a different sort of spirit, it is true: but I am sure there can be none more inflammable than that of John Paul! To be serious, however, and to return from chasing this Will-o'-the-wisp, there cannot be a more valuable endowment to a writer of inordinate sensibility, than this inordinate agility of the understanding; the active faculty balances the passive; and

* Of which the most tremendous case I have met with was this and, as I greatly desire to believe so good a story, I should be more easy in mind if I knew that anybody else had ever believed it. In the year 1818, an Irishman, and a great lover of whiskey, persisted obstinately, though often warned of his error, in attempting to blow out a candle: the candle, however, blew out the Irishman, and the following result was sworn to before the coroner. The Irishman shot off like a Congreve rocket, passed with the velocity of a twenty-four pounder through I know not how many storeys, ascended to the "highest heaven of invention," viz. to the garrets, where slept a tailor and his wife. Feather-beds, which stop cannon-balls, gave way before the Irishman's skull: he passed like a gimlet through two mattresses, a feather-bed, &c., and stood grinning at the tailor and his wife, without his legs, however, which he had left behind him in the second floor.

without such a balance, there is great risk of falling into a sickly tone of maudlin sentimentality, from which Sterne cannot be pronounced wholly free,—and still less a later author of pathetic tales, whose name I omit. By the way, I must observe, that it is this fiery, meteoric, scintillating, coruscating power of John Paul, which is the true foundation of his frequent obscurity. You will find that he is reputed the most difficult of all German authors; and many Germans are so little aware of the true derivation of this difficulty, that it has often been said to me, as an Englishman, "What! can *you* read John Paul?"—meaning to say, can you read such difficult German? Doubtless, in some small proportion, the mere language and style are responsible for his difficulty; and, in a sense somewhat different, applying it to a mastery over the language in which he writes, the expression of Quintilian in respect to the student of Cicero may be transferred to the student of John Paul: "Ille se profecisse sciat, cui Cicero valde placebit:" he may rest assured that he has made a competent progress in the German language who can read Paul Richter. Indeed he is a sort of *proof* author in this respect; a man, who can "*construe*" him, cannot be stopped by any difficulties purely verbal. But, after all, these verbal obscurities are but the necessary result and product of his style of thinking; the nimbleness of his transitions often makes him elliptical: the vast expansion and discursiveness in his range of notice and observation, carries him into every department and nook of human life, of science, of art, and of literature; whence comes a proportionably extensive vocabulary, and a prodigious compass of idiomatic phraseology: and finally, the fineness and evanescent brilliancy of his oblique glances and surface-skimmering allusions, often fling but half a meaning on the mind; and one is puzzled to make out its comple-

ment. *Hence* it is, that is to say, from his mode of presenting things, his lyrical style of connexion, and the prodigious fund of knowledge on which he draws for his illustrations and his images, that his obscurity arises. And these are causes which must affect his own countrymen no less than foreigners. Further than as these causes must occasionally produce a corresponding difficulty of diction, I know of no reason why an Englishman should be thought specially concerned in his obscurity, or less able to find his way through it than any German. But just the same mistake is commonly made about Lycophron: he is represented as the most difficult of all Greek authors. Meantime, as far as language is concerned, he is one of the easiest: some peculiar words he has, I acknowledge, but it is not single words that constitute verbal obscurity; it is the construction, synthesis, composition, arrangement, and involution of words, which only can obstruct the reader; now in these parts of style Lycophron is remarkably lucid. Where then lies his reputed darkness? Purely in this,—that, by way of colouring the style with the sullen views of prophetic vision, Cassandra is made to describe all those on whom the fates of Troy hinged, by enigmatic periphrases, oftentimes drawn from the most obscure incidents in their lives: just as if I should describe Cromwell by the expression, "*unfortunate tamer of horses*," because he once nearly broke his neck in Hyde-Park, when driving four-in-hand; or should describe a noble lord of the last century as "*the roaster of men*," because when a member of the Hell-fire Club, he actually tied a poor man to the spit; and having spitted him, proceeded to roast him.*

* "*Proceeded* to roast him,—yes: but did he roast him?" Really I can't say. Some people like their mutton underdone; and Lord — might like his *man* underdone. All I know of the sequel is, that the

Third.—You will naturally collect from the account here given of John Paul's activity of understanding and fancy, that over and above his humour, he must have an overflowing opulence of wit. In fact he has. On this earth of ours (I know nothing about the books in Jupiter, where Kant has proved that the authors will be far abler than any poor Terræ Filius, such as Shakspere or Milton), but on this poor earth of ours I am acquainted with no book of such unintermitting and brilliant wit as his *Vorschule der Aesthetik;* it glitters like the stars on a frosty night; or like the stars on Count ——'s coat; or like the ἀνάριθμον γέλασμα, the multitudinous laughing of the ocean under the glancing lights of sunbeams; or like a *feu-de-joie* of fireworks: in fact, John Paul's works are the galaxy of the German literary firmament. I defy a man to lay his hand on that sentence which is not vital and ebullient with wit. What *is* wit? We are told that it is the perception of resemblances; whilst the perception of differences, we are requested to believe, is reserved for another faculty. Very profound distinctions no doubt, but very senseless for all that. I shall not here attempt a definition of wit: but I will just mention what I conceive to be one of the distinctions between wit and humour, viz., that whilst wit is a purely intellectual thing, into every act of the humorous mood there is an influx of the *moral* nature: rays, direct or refracted, from the will and the affections, from the disposition and the temperament, enter into all humour; and thence it is, that humour is of a diffusive quality, pervading an entire course of thoughts; whilst wit—because

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sun expressed no horror at this Thyestean cookery, which might be because he had set two hours before: but the Sun newspaper *did*, when it rose some nights after (as it always does) at six o'clock in the evening.

it has no existence apart from certain logical relations of a thought which are definitely assignable, and can be counted even—is always punctually concentrated within the circle of a few words. On this account I would not advise you to read those of John Paul's works which are the wittiest, but those which are more distinguished for their humour. You will thus see more of the man. In a future letter I will send you a list of the whole distributed into classes.

Fourthly and *finally*.—Let me tell you what it is that has fixed John Paul in my esteem and affection. Did you ever look into that sickening heap of abortions—the Ireland forgeries? In one of these (Deed of Trust to John Hemynges) he makes Shakspere say, as his reason for having assigned to a friend such and such duties usually confided to lawyers—that he had "founde muche wickednesse amongste those of the lawe." On this, Mr. Malone, whose indignation was justly roused to Shakspere's name borrowed to countenance such loathsome and stupid vulgarity, expresses himself with much feeling;* and I confess that, for my part, that passage alone, without the innumerable marks of grossest forgery which stare upon one in every word, would have been quite sufficient to expose the whole as a base and most childish imposture. For, so far was Shakspere from any capability of leaving behind him a malignant libel on a whole body of learned men, that, among all writers of every age, he stands forward as the one who looked most benignantly, and with the most fraternal eye, upon all the ways of men, however weak or foolish. From every sort of vice and infirmity he drew nutriment for his philosophic mind. It is to the honour of John Paul, that in this, as in other respects, he constantly reminds me of Shakspere. Everywhere a spirit of

* *Inquiry*, &c., p. 279.

kindness prevails; his satire is everywhere playful, delicate, and clad in smiles; never bitter, scornful, or malignant. But this is not all. I could produce many passages from Shakspere, which show that, if his anger was ever roused, it was against the abuses of the time; not mere political abuses, but those that had a deeper root and dishonoured human nature. Here again the resemblance holds in John Paul; and this is the point in which I said that I would notice a bond of affinity between him and Schiller. Both were intolerant haters of ignoble things, though placable towards the ignoble men. Both yearned, according to their different temperaments, for a happier state of things: I mean for human nature generally, and, in a political sense, for Germany. To his latest years, Schiller, when suffering under bodily decay and anguish, was an earnest contender for whatever promised to elevate human nature, and bore emphatic witness against the evils of the time.* John Paul, who still lives, is of a gentler nature; but his aspirations tend to the same point, though expressed in a milder and more hopeful spirit. With all this, however, they give a rare lesson on the *manner* of conducting such a cause; for you will nowhere find that they take any indecent liberties, of a personal sort, with those princes whose governments they most abhorred. Though safe enough from their vengeance, they never forgot in their indignation, as patriots and as philosophers, the respect due to the rank of others, or to themselves as scholars, and the favourites of their country. Some other modern authors of Germany *may* be great writers, but Frederick Schiller and John Paul Richter I shall always view with the feelings due to great men.

* Goethe has lately (*Morphologie*, p. 108, *Zweyter heft*) recurred to his conversations with Schiller in a way which places himself in rather an unfavourable contrast.

ANALECTS FROM RICHTER.

THE HAPPY LIFE OF A PARISH PRIEST IN SWEDEN.

SWEDEN apart, the condition of a parish priest is in itself sufficiently happy; in Sweden, then, much more so. There he enjoys summer and winter pure and unalloyed by any tedious interruptions. A Swedish spring, which is always a late one, is no repetition, in a lower key, of the harshness of winter, but anticipates, and is a prelibation of perfect summer—laden with blossoms—radiant with the lily and the rose; insomuch, that a Swedish summer night represents implicitly one half of Italy, and a winter night one half of the world beside.

I will begin with winter, and I will suppose it to be Christmas. The priest, whom we shall imagine to be a German, and summoned from the southern climate of Germany upon presentation to the church of a Swedish hamlet lying in a high polar latitude, rises in cheerfulness about seven o'clock in the morning, and till half-past nine he burns his lamp. At nine o'clock the stars are still shining, and the unclouded moon even yet longer. This prolongation of star-light into the forenoon is to him delightful, for he is a German, and has a sense of something marvellous in a starry forenoon. Methinks I behold the priest and his flock moving towards the church with lanterns; the lights dispersed amongst the crowd connect the congregation into the appearance of some domestic group or larger household, and carry the priest back to his childish years during the winter season and Christmas matins, when every hand bore its candle. Arrived at the pulpit, he declares to his audience the plain truth, word for word, as it stands in

the gospel; in the presence of God all intellectual pretensions are called upon to be silent, the very reason ceases to be reasonable, nor is anything reasonable in the sight of God but a sincere and upright heart. . . . .

Just as he and his flock are issuing from the church the bright Christmas sun ascends above the horizon, and shoots his beams upon their faces. The old men, who are numerous in Sweden, are all tinged with the colours of youth by the rosy morning lustre; and the priest, as he looks away from them to mother earth lying in the sleep of winter, and to the churchyard, where the flowers and the men are all in their graves together, might secretly exclaim with the poet—"Upon the dead mother, in peace and utter gloom, are reposing the dead children. After a time, uprises the everlasting sun; and the mother starts up at the summons of the heavenly dawn with a resurrection of her ancient bloom. And her children? Yes: but they must wait awhile."

At home he is awaited by a warm study, and a "long-levelled rule" of sunlight upon the book-clad wall.

The afternoon he spends delightfully; for, having before him such perfect flower-stand of pleasures, he scarcely knows where he should settle. Supposing it to be Christmas day, he preaches again: he preaches on a subject which calls up images of the beauteous eastern-land, or of eternity. By this time, twilight and gloom prevailed through the church: only a couple of wax-lights upon the altar throw wondrous and mighty shadows through the aisles: the angel that hangs down from the roof above the baptismal font is awoke into a solemn life by the shadows and the rays, and seems almost in the act of ascension: through the windows the stars or the moons are beginning to peer: aloft, in the pulpit, which is now hid in gloom, the priest

is inflamed and possessed by the sacred burden of glad tidings which he is announcing: he is lost and insensible to all besides; and from amidst the darkness which surrounds him, he pours down his thunders, with tears and agitation, reasoning of future worlds, and of the heaven of heavens, and whatsoever else can most powerfully shake the heart and the affections.

Descending from his pulpit in these holy fervours, he now, perhaps, takes a walk: it is about four o'clock; and he walks beneath a sky lit up by the shifting northern lights, that to his eye appear but an Aurora striking upwards from the eternal morning of the south, or as a forest composed of saintly thickets, like the fiery bushes of Moses, that are round the throne of God.

Thus, if it be the afternoon of Christmas-day; but, if it be any other afternoon, visitors, perhaps, come and bring their well-bred, grown-up daughters. Like the fashionable world in London, he dines at sunset; that is to say, like the *un*-fashionable world of London, he dines at two o'clock; and he drinks coffee by moonlight; and the parsonage-house becomes an enchanted palace of pleasure gleaming with twilight, starlight, and moonlight. Or, perhaps, he goes over to the schoolmaster, who is teaching his afternoon school: there, by the candle-light, he gathers round his knees all the scholars, as if—being the children of his spiritual children—they must therefore be his own grandchildren; and with delightful words he wins their attention, and pours knowledge into their docile hearts.

All these pleasures failing, he may pace up and down in his library, already, by three o'clock, gloomy with twilight, but fitfully enlivened by a glowing fire, and steadily by the bright moonlight; and he needs do no more than taste at every turn of his walk a little orange marmalade—to call

up images of beautiful Italy, and its gardens, and orange groves, before all his five senses, and, as it were, to the very tip of his tongue. Looking at the moon, he will not fail to recollect that the very same silver disc hangs at the very same moment between the branches of the laurels in Italy. It will delight him to consider that the Æolian harp, and the lark, and indeed music of all kinds, and the stars, and children, are just the same in hot climates and in cold. And when the post-boy, that rides in with news from Italy, winds his horn through the hamlet, and with a few simple notes raises up on the frozen window of his study a vision of flowery realms; and when he plays with treasured leaves of roses and of lilies from some departed summer, or with plumes of a bird of paradise, the memorial of some distant friend; when further, his heart is moved by the magnificent sounds of Lady-day, Sallad-season, Cherry-time, Trinity-Sundays, the rose of June, &c., how can he fail to forget that he is in Sweden by the time that his lamp is brought in; and then, indeed, he will be somewhat disconcerted to recognise his study in what had now shaped itself to his fancy as a room in some foreign land. However, if he would pursue this airy creation, he need but light at his lamp a wax-candle end, to gain a glimpse through the whole evening into that world of fashion and splendour, from which he purchased the said wax-candle end. For I should suppose, that at the court of Stockholm, as elsewhere, there must be candle-ends to be bought of the state-footmen.

But now, after the lapse of half-a-year, all at once there strikes upon his heart something more beautiful than Italy, where the sun sets so much earlier in summer-time than it does at our Swedish hamlet: and what is *that?* It is the longest day, with the rich freight it carries in its bosom,

and leading by the hand the early dawn blushing with rosy light, and melodious with the carolling of larks at one o'clock in the morning. Before two, that is, at sunrise, the elegant party that we mentioned last winter arrive in gay clothing at the parsonage; for they are bound on a little excursion of pleasure in company with the priest. At two o'clock they are in motion; at which time all the flowers are glittering, and the forests are gleaming with the mighty light. The warm sun threatens them with no storm nor thunder showers; for both are rare in Sweden. The priest, in common with the rest of the company, is attired in the costume of Sweden; he wears his short jacket with a broad scarf, his short cloak above that, his round hat with floating plumes, and shoes tied with bright ribbons; like the rest of the men, he resembles a Spanish knight, or a Provençal, or other man of the south; more especially when he and his gay company are seen flying through the lofty foliage luxuriant with blossom, that within so short a period of weeks has shot forth from the garden plots and the naked boughs.

That a longest day like this, bearing such a cornucopia of sunshine, of cloudless ether, of buds and bells, of blossoms and of leisure, should pass away more rapidly than the shortest—is not difficult to suppose. As early as eight o'clock in the evening the party breaks up; the sun is now burning more gently over the half-closed sleepy flowers; about nine he has mitigated his rays, and is beheld bathing as it were naked in the blue depths of heaven; about ten, at which hour the company reassemble at the parsonage, the priest is deeply moved, for throughout the hamlet, though the tepid sun, now sunk to the horizon, is still shedding a sullen glow upon the cottages and the window-panes, everything reposes in profoundest silence and sleep:

the birds even are all slumbering in the golden summits of the woods; and at last, the solitary sun himself sets, like a moon, amidst the universal quiet of nature. To our priest, walking in his romantic dress, it seems as though rosy-coloured realms were laid open, in which fairies and spirits range; and he would scarcely feel an emotion of wonder, if, in this hour of golden vision, his brother, who ran away in childhood, should suddenly present himself as one alighting from some blooming heaven of enchantment.

The priest will not allow his company to depart: he detains them in the parsonage garden, where, says he, every one that chooses may slumber away in beautiful bowers the brief, warm hours until the reappearance of the sun. This proposal is generally adopted, and the garden is occupied: many a lovely pair are making believe to sleep, but, in fact, are holding each other by the hand. The happy priest walks up and down through the parterres. Coolness comes, and a few stars. His night-violets and gilly-flowers open and breathe out their powerful odours. To the north, from the eternal morning of the pole, exhales as it were a golden dawn. The priest thinks of the village of his childhood far away in Germany; he thinks of the life of man, his hopes, and his aspirations; and he is calm and at peace with himself. Then all at once starts up the morning sun in his freshness. Some there are in the garden who would fain confound it with the evening sun, and close their eyes again; but the larks betray all, and awaken every sleeper from bower to bower.

Then again begin pleasure and morning in their pomp of radiance; and almost I could persuade myself to delineate the course of this day also, though it differs from its predecessor hardly by so much as the leaf of a rose-bud.

DREAM UPON THE UNIVERSE.

I HAD been reading an excellent dissertation of Krüger's upon the old vulgar error which regards the space from one earth and sun to another as empty. Our sun, together with all its planets, fills only the 31,419,460,000,000,000th part of the whole space between itself and the next solar body. Gracious Heavens! thought I, in what an unfathomable abyss of emptiness were this universe swallowed up and lost, if all were void and utter vacuity except the few shining points of dust which we call a planetary system! To conceive of our earthly ocean as the abode of death and essentially incapable of life, and of its populous islands as being no greater than snail-shells, would be a far less error in proportion to the compass of our planet than that which attributes emptiness to the great mundane spaces; and the error would be far less if the marine animals were to ascribe life and fulness exclusively to the sea, and to regard the atmospheric ocean above them as empty and untenanted. According to Herschel, the most remote of the galaxies which the telescope discovers, lie at such a distance from us, that their light, which reaches us at this day, must have set out on its journey two millions of years ago; and thus by optical laws it is possible that whole squadrons of the starry hosts may be now reaching us with their beams, which have themselves perished ages ago. Upon this scale of computation for the dimensions of the world, what heights and depths and breadths must there be in this universe—in comparison of which the positive universe would be itself a nihility, were it crossed, pierced, and belted about by so illimitable a wilderness of nothing! But is it possible that any man can for a moment overlook those vast forces which must pervade these imaginary deserts with

eternal surges of flux and reflux, to make the very paths to those distant starry coasts voyageable to our eyes? Can you lock up in a sun or in its planets their reciprocal forces of attraction? Does not the light stream through the immeasurable spaces between our earth and the nebula which is furthest removed from us? And in this stream of light there is as ample an existence of the positive, and as much a home for the abode of a spiritual world, as there is a dwelling-place for thy own spirit in the substance of the brain. To these and similar reflections succeeded the following dream:—

Methought my body sank down in ruins, and my inner form stepped out apparelled in light; and by my side there stood another form which resembled my own, except that it did not shine like mine, but lightened unceasingly. "Two thoughts," said the form, "are the wings with which I move: the thought of *Here*, and the thought of *There*. And, behold! I am yonder,"—pointing to a distant world. "Come, then, and wait on me with thy thoughts and with thy flight, that I may show to thee the universe under a veil." And I flew along with the Form. In a moment our earth fell back, behind our consuming flight, into an abyss of distance; a faint gleam only was reflected from the summits of the Cordilleras, and a few moments more reduced the sun to a little star; and soon there remained nothing visible of our system except a comet which was travelling from our sun with angelic speed in the direction of Sirius. Our flight now carried us so rapidly through the flocks of solar bodies —flocks past counting, unless to their heavenly Shepherd— that scarcely could they expand themselves before us into the magnitude of moons, before they sank behind us into pale nebular gleams; and their planetary earths could not reveal themselves for a moment to the transcendent rapidity

of our course. At length Sirius and all the brotherhood of our constellations and the galaxy of our heavens stood far below our feet as a little nebula amongst other yet more distant nebulæ. Thus we flew on through the starry wildernesses: one heaven after another unfurled its immeasurable banners before us, and then rolled up behind us: galaxy behind galaxy towered up into solemn altitudes before which the spirit shuddered; and they stood in long array through which the Infinite Being might pass in progress. Sometimes the Form that lightened would outfly my weary thoughts; and then it would be seen far off before me like a coruscation amongst the stars—till suddenly I thought again to myself the thought of *There*, and then I was at its side. But, as we were thus swallowed up by one abyss of stars after another, and the heavens above our eyes were not emptier, neither were the heavens below them fuller; and as suns without intermission fell into the solar ocean like water-spouts of a storm which fall into the ocean of waters; then at length the human heart within me was overburdened and weary, and yearned after some narrow cell or quiet oratory in this metropolitan cathedral of the universe. And I said to the Form at my side, "Oh, Spirit! has then this universe no end!" And the Form answered and said, "Lo! it has no beginning."

Suddenly, however, the heavens above us appeared to be emptied, and not a star was seen to twinkle in the mighty abyss; no gleam of light to break the unity of the infinite darkness. The starry hosts behind us had all contracted into an obscure nebula: and at length *that* also had vanished. And I thought to myself, "At last the universe has ended;" and I trembled at the thought of the illimitable dungeon of pure, pure darkness which here began to imprison the creation: I shuddered at the dead sea of

nothing, in whose unfathomable zone of blackness the jewel of the glittering universe seemed to be set and buried for ever; and through the night in which we moved I saw the Form which still lightened as before, but left all around it unilluminated. Then the Form said to me in my anguish —"Oh! creature of little faith! Look up! the most ancient light is coming!" I looked; and in a moment came a twilight—in the twinkling of an eye a galaxy—and then with a choral burst rushed in all the company of stars. For centuries grey with age, for millennia hoary with antiquity, had the starry light been on its road to us; and at length out of heights inaccessible to thought it had reached us. Now then, as through some renovated century, we flew through new cycles of heavens. At length again came a starless interval; and far longer it endured, before the beams of a starry host again had reached us.

As we thus advanced for ever through an interchange of nights and solar heavens, and as the interval grew still longer and longer before the last heaven we had quitted contracted to a point, and as once we issued suddenly from the middle of thickest night into an Aurora Borealis, the herald of an expiring world, and we found throughout this cycle of solar systems that a day of judgment had indeed arrived; the suns had sickened, and the planets were heaving—rocking, yawning in convulsions, the subterraneous waters of the great deeps were breaking up, and lightnings that were ten diameters of a world in length ran along—from east to west—from Zenith to Nadir; and here and there, where a sun should have been, we saw instead through the misty vapour a gloomy, ashy, leaden corpse of a solar body, that sucked in flames from the perishing world, but gave out neither light nor heat; and as I saw, through a vista which had no end, mountain

towering above mountain, and piled up with what seemed glittering snow from the conflict of solar and planetary bodies; then my spirit bent under the load of the universe, and I said to the Form, "Rest, rest; and lead me no farther: I am too solitary in the creation itself; and in its deserts yet more so: the full world is great, but the empty world is greater; and with the universe increase its Zaarahs."

Then the Form touched me like the flowing of a breath, and spoke more gently than before:—"In the presence of God there is no emptiness: above, below, between, and round about the stars, in the darkness and in the light, dwelleth the true and very Universe, the sum and fountain of all that is. But thy spirit can bear only earthly images of the unearthly; now then I cleanse thy sight with euphrasy; look forth, and behold the images." Immediately my eyes were opened; and I looked, and I saw as it were an interminable sea of light—sea immeasurable, sea unfathomable, sea without a shore. All spaces between all heavens were filled with happiest light: and there was a thundering of floods: and there were seas above the seas, and seas below the seas: and I saw all the trackless regions that we had voyaged over: and my eye comprehended the farthest and the nearest: and darkness had become light, and the light darkness: for the deserts and wastes of the creation were now filled with the sea of light, and in this sea the suns floated like ash-grey blossoms, and the planets like black grains of seed. Then my heart comprehended that immortality dwelled in the spaces between the worlds, and death only amongst the worlds. Upon all the suns there walked upright shadows in the form of men: but they were glorified when they quitted these perishable worlds, and when they sank into the sea of light: and the

murky planets, I perceived, were but cradles for the infant spirits of the universe of light. In the Zaarahs of the creation I saw—I heard—I felt—the glittering—the echoing—the breathing of life and creative power. The suns were but as spinning-wheels, the planets no more than weavers' shuttles, in relation to the infinite web which composes the veil of Isis;* which veil is hung over the whole creation, and lengthens as any finite being attempts to raise it. And in sight of this immeasurability of life, no sadness could endure; but only joy that knew no limit, and happy prayers.

But in the midst of this great vision of the Universe the Form that lightened eternally had become invisible, or had vanished to its home in the unseen world of spirits: I was left alone in the centre of a universe of life, and I yearned after some sympathizing being. Suddenly from the starry deeps there came floating through the ocean of light a planetary body; and upon it there stood a woman whose face was as the face of a Madonna; and by her side there stood a child, whose countenance varied not, neither was it magnified as he drew nearer. This child was a king, for I saw that he had a crown upon his head: but the crown was a crown of thorns. Then also I perceived that the planetary body was our unhappy earth; and, as the earth

* On this antique mode of symbolizing the mysterious Nature which is at the heart of all things and connects all things into one whole, possibly the reader may feel not unwilling to concur with Kant's remark at page 197 of his *Critik der Urtheilskraft:* "Perhaps in all human composition there is no passage of greater sublimity, nor amongst all sublime thoughts any which has been more sublimely expressed, than that which occurs in the inscription upon the temple of Isis (the Great Mother—Nature): *I am whatsoever is—whatsoever has been—whatsoever shall be: and the veil which is over my countenance, no mortal hand has ever raised.*"

drew near, this child who had come forth from the starry deeps to comfort me threw upon me a look of gentlest pity and of unutterable love, so that in my heart I had a sudden rapture of joy such as passes all understanding, and I awoke in the tumult of my happiness.

I awoke: but my happiness survived my dream; and I exclaimed—Oh! how beautiful is death, seeing that we die in a world of life and of creation without end! and I blessed God for my life upon earth, but much more for the life in those unseen depths of the universe which are emptied of all but the Supreme Reality, and where no earthly life nor perishable hope can enter.

COMPLAINT OF THE BIRD IN A DARKENED CAGE.

"Ah!" said the imprisoned bird, "how unhappy were I in my eternal night, but for those melodious tones which sometimes make their way to me like beams of light from afar, and cheer my gloomy day. But I will myself repeat these heavenly melodies like an echo, until I have stamped them in my heart; and then I shall be able to bring comfort to myself in my darkness!" Thus spoke the little warbler, and soon had learned the sweet airs that were sung to it with voice and instrument. That done, the curtain was raised; for the darkness had been purposely contrived to assist in its instruction. O man! how often dost thou complain of overshadowing grief and of darkness resting upon thy days! And yet what cause for complaint, unless indeed thou hast failed to learn wisdom from suffering? For is not the whole sum of human life a veiling and an obscuring of the immortal spirit of man? Then first, when the fleshly curtain falls away, may it soar upwards into a region of happier melodies!

ON THE DEATH OF YOUNG CHILDREN.

Ephemera die all at sunset, and no insect of this class has ever sported in the beams of the morning sun.* Happier are ye, little human ephemera! Ye played only in the ascending beams, and in the early dawn, and in the eastern light; ye drank only of the prelibations of life; hovered for a little space over a world of freshness and of blossoms; and fell asleep in innocence before yet the morning dew was exhaled!

THE PROPHETIC DEW-DROPS.

A delicate child, pale and prematurely wise, was complaining on a hot morning that the poor dew-drops had been too hastily snatched away, and not allowed to glitter on the flowers like other happier dew-drops† that live the whole night through, and sparkle in the moonlight and through the morning onwards to noon-day. "The sun," said the child, "has chased them away with his heat, or swallowed them in his wrath." Soon after came rain and a rainbow; whereupon his father pointed upwards: "See," said he, "there stand thy dew-drops gloriously re-set—a glittering jewellery—in the heavens; and the clownish foot tramples on them no more. By this, my child, thou art taught that what withers upon earth blooms again in heaven." Thus the father spoke, and knew not that he spoke prefiguring words: for soon after the delicate child,

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* Some class of ephemeral insects are born about five o'clock in the afternoon, and die before midnight, supposing them to live to old age.

† If the dew is evaporated immediately upon the sun-rising, rain and storm follow in the afternoon; but, if it stays and glitters for a long time after sunrise, the day continues fair.

with the morning brightness of his early wisdom, was exhaled, like a dew-drop, into heaven.

ON DEATH.

We should all think of death as a less hideous object, if it simply untenanted our bodies of a spirit, without corrupting them; secondly, if the grief which we experience at the spectacle of our friends' graves were not by some confusion of the mind blended with the image of our own; thirdly, if we had not in this life seated ourselves in a warm domestic nest, which we are unwilling to quit for the cold blue regions of the unfathomable heavens; finally, if death were denied to us. Once in dreams I saw a human being of heavenly intellectual faculties, and his aspirations were heavenly; but he was chained (methought) eternally to the earth. The immortal old man had five great wounds in his happiness—five worms that gnawed for ever at his heart: he was unhappy in spring-time, because *that* is a season of hope, and rich with phantoms of far happier days than any which this aceldama of earth can realize. He was unhappy at the sound of music, which dilates the heart of man into its whole capacity for the infinite, and he cried aloud—"Away, away! Thou speakest of things which throughout my endless life I have found not, and shall not find!" He was unhappy at the remembrance of earthly affections and dissevered hearts: for love is a plant which may bud in this life, but it must flourish in another. He was unhappy under the glorious spectacle of the starry host, and ejaculated for ever in his heart—"So then, I am parted from you to all eternity by an impassable abyss: the great universe of suns is above, below, and round about me: but I am chained to a little ball of dust and ashes." He was unhappy before the great ideas of Virtue, of

Truth, and of God; because he knew how feeble are the approximations to them which a son of earth can make. But this was a dream: God be thanked, that in reality there is no such craving and asking eye directed upwards to heaven, to which death will not one day bring an answer!

IMAGINATION UNTAMED BY THE COARSER REALITIES OF LIFE.

Happy is every actor in the guilty drama of life, to whom the higher illusion within supplies or conceals the external illusion; to whom, in the tumult of his part and its intellectual interest, the bungling landscapes of the stage have the bloom and reality of nature, and whom the loud parting and shocking of the scenes disturb not in his dream!

SATIRICAL NOTICE OF REVIEWERS.

In Suabia, in Saxony, in Pomerania, are towns in which are stationed a strange sort of officers—valuers of author's flesh, something like our old market-lookers in this town.* They are commonly called tasters (or *Prægustatores*) because they eat a mouthful of every book beforehand, and tell the people whether its flavour be good. We authors, in spite, call them *reviewers*: but I believe an action of defamation would lie against us for such bad words. The tasters write no books themselves; consequently they have the more time to look over and tax those of other people. Or, if they do sometimes write books, they are bad ones: which

* "*Market-lookers*" is a provincial term (I know not whether used in London) for the public officers who examine the quality of the provisions exposed for sale. By *this town* I suppose John Paul to mean Bayreuth, the place of his residence.

again is very advantageous to them; for who can understand the theory of badness in other people's books so well as those who have learned it by practice in their own? They are reputed the guardians of literature and the literati for the same reason that St. Nepomuk is the patron saint of bridges and of all who pass over them—viz., because he himself once lost his life from a bridge.

FEMALE TONGUES.

Hippel, the author of the book "Upon Marriage," says —"A woman, that does not talk, must be a stupid woman." But Hippel is an author whose opinions it is more safe to admire than to adopt. The most intelligent women are often silent amongst women; and again the most stupid and the most silent are often neither one nor the other except amongst men. In general the current remark upon men is valid also with respect to women—that those for the most part are the greatest thinkers who are the least talkers; as frogs cease to croak when *light* is brought to the water edge. However, in fact, the disproportionate talking of women arises out of the sedentariness of their labours: sedentary artisans, as tailors, shoemakers, weavers, have this habit as well as hypochondriacal tendencies in common with women. Apes do not talk, as savages say, that they may not be set to work; but women often talk double their share—even *because* they work.

FORGIVENESS.

Nothing is more moving to man than the spectacle of reconciliation: our weaknesses are thus indemnified and are not too costly—being the price we pay for the hour of forgiveness: and the archangel, who has never felt anger, has reason to envy the man who subdues it. When

thou forgivest,—the man, who has pierced thy heart, stands to thee in the relation of the sea-worm that perforates the shell of the mussel, which straightway closes the wound with a pearl.

The graves of the best of men, of the noblest martyrs, are, like the graves of the Herrnhuters (the Moravian Brethren), level and undistinguishable from the universal earth: and, if the earth could give up her secrets, our whole globe would appear a Westminster Abbey laid flat. Ah! what a multitude of tears, what myriads of bloody drops have been shed in secrecy about the three corner trees of earth—the tree of life, the tree of knowledge, and the tree of freedom—shed, but never reckoned! It is only great periods of calamity that reveal to us our great men, as comets are revealed by total eclipses of the sun. Not merely upon the field of battle, but also upon the consecrated soil of virtue, and upon the classic ground of truth, thousands of *nameless* heroes must fall and struggle to build up the footstool from which history surveys the *one* hero, whose name is embalmed, bleeding—conquering—and resplendent. The grandest of heroic deeds are those which are performed within four walls and in domestic privacy. And, because history records only the self-sacrifices of the male sex, and because she dips her pen only in blood, therefore is it that in the eyes of the unseen spirit of the world our annals appear doubtless far more beautiful and noble than in our own.

THE GRANDEUR OF MAN IN HIS LITTLENESS.

Man upon this earth would be vanity and hollowness, dust and ashes, vapour and a bubble, were it not that he felt himself to be so. That it is possible for him to

harbour such a feeling,—*this*, by implying a comparison of himself with something higher in himself, *this* is it which makes him the immortal creature that he is.

NIGHT.

The earth is every day overspread with the veil of night for the same reason as the cages of birds are darkened—viz., that we may the more readily apprehend the higher harmonies of thought in the hush and quiet of darkness. Thoughts, which day turns into smoke and mist, stand about us in the night as lights and flames: even as the column which fluctuates above the crater of Vesuvius, in the daytime appears a pillar of cloud, but by night a pillar of fire.

THE STARS.

Look up, and behold the eternal fields of light that lie round about the throne of God. Had no star ever appeared in the heavens, to man there would have been no heavens; and he would have laid himself down to his last sleep, in a spirit of anguish, as upon a gloomy earth vaulted over by a material arch—solid and impervious.

MARTYRDOM.

To die for truth—is not to die for one's country, but to die for the world. Truth, like the *Venus de Medici*, will pass down in thirty fragments to posterity: but posterity will collect and recompose them into a goddess. Then also thy temple, O eternal Truth! that now stands half below the earth, made hollow by the sepulchres of its witnesses, will raise itself in the total majesty of its proportions; and will stand in monumental granite; and every pillar on which it rests, will be fixed in the grave of a martyr.

THE QUARRELS OF FRIENDS.

Why is it that the most fervent love becomes more fervent by brief interruption and reconciliation? and why must a storm agitate our affections before they can raise the highest rainbow of peace? Ah! for this reason it is—because all passions feel their object to be as eternal as themselves, and no love can admit the feeling that the beloved object should die. And under this feeling of imperishableness it is that we hard fields of ice shock together so harshly, whilst all the while under the sunbeams of a little space of seventy years we are rapidly dissolving.

DREAMING.

But for dreams, that lay mosaic worlds tesselated with flowers and jewels before the blind sleeper, and surround the recumbent living with the figures of the dead in the upright attitude of life, the time would be too long before we are allowed to rejoin our brothers, parents, friends: every year we should become more and more painfully sensible of the desolation made around us by death, if sleep—the ante-chamber of the grave—were not hung by dreams with the busts of those who live in the other world.

TWO DIVISIONS OF PHILOSOPHIC MINDS.

There are two very different classes of philosophical heads, which, since Kant has introduced into philosophy the idea of positive and negative quantities, I shall willingly classify by means of that distinction. The *positive* intellect is, like the poet, in conjunction with the outer world, the father of an inner world; and, like the poet also, holds up a transforming mirror in which the entangled and distorted

members as they are seen in our actual experience enter into new combinations which compose a fair and luminous world: the hypothesis of Idealism (*i.e.* the Fichtéan system), the Monads and the Pre-established Harmony of Leibnitz—and Spinozism are all births of a genial moment, and not the wooden carving of logical toil. Such men therefore as Leibnitz, Plato, Herder, &c., I call positive intellects; because they seek and yield the positive; and because their inner world, having raised itself higher out of the water than in others, thereby overlooks a larger prospect of island and continents. A negative head, on the other hand, discovers by its acuteness—not any positive truths but the negative (*i.e.* the errors) of other people. Such an intellect, as for example Bayle, one of the greatest of that class—appraises the funds of others, rather than brings any fresh funds of his own. In lieu of the obscure ideas which he finds he gives us clear ones; but in this there is no positive accession to our knowledge; for all that the clear idea contains in development, exists already by implication in the obscure idea. Negative intellects of every age are unanimous in their abhorrence of everything positive. Impulse, feeling, instinct—everything in short which is incomprehensible, they can endure just once—that is, at the summit of their chain of arguments as a sort of hook on which they may hang them, but never afterwards.

DIGNITY OF MAN IN SELF-SACRIFICE.

That, for which man offers up his blood or his property, must be more valuable than they. A good man does not fight with half the courage for his own life that he shows in the protection of another's. The mother, who will hazard nothing for herself, will hazard all in defence of her

child: in short, only for the nobility within us, only for virtue, will man open his veins and offer up his spirit: but this nobility, this virtue, presents different phases: with the Christian martyr it is faith; with the savage it is honour; with the republican it is liberty.

CONVERSATION.

AMONGST the arts connected with the *elegancies* of social life, in a degree which nobody denies, is the art of conversation; but in a degree which almost everybody denies, if one may judge by their neglect of its simplest rules, this same art is not less connected with the *uses* of social life. Neither the luxury of conversation, nor the possible benefit of conversation, is to be found under that rude administration of it which generally prevails. Without an art, without some simple system of rules, gathered from experience of such contingencies as are most likely to mislead the practice, when left to its own guidance, no act of man nor effort accomplishes its purposes in perfection. The sagacious Greek would not so much as drink a glass of wine amongst a few friends without a systematic art to guide him, and a regular form of polity to control him, which art and which polity (begging Plato's pardon) were better than any of more ambitious aim in his Republic. Every *symposium* had its set of rules, and rigorous they were; had its own *symposiarch* to govern it, and a tyrant he was. Elected democratically, he became, when once installed, an autocrat not less despotic than the King of Persia. Purposes still more slight and fugitive have been organized into arts. Taking soup gracefully, under the difficulties opposed

to it by a dinner dress at that time fashionable, was reared into an art about forty-five years ago by a Frenchman, who lectured upon it to ladies in London; and the most brilliant duchess of that day, viz., the Duchess of Devonshire, was amongst his best pupils. Spitting, if the reader will pardon the mention of so gross a fact, was shown to be a very difficult art, and publicly prelected upon about the same time, in the same great capital. The professors in this faculty were the hackney-coachmen; the pupils were gentlemen, who paid a guinea each for three lessons; the chief problem in this system of hydraulics being to throw the salivating column in a parabolic curve from the centre of Parliament Street, when driving four-in-hand, to the foot pavements, right and left, so as to alarm the consciences of guilty peripatetics on either side. The ultimate problem, which closed the *curriculum* of study, was held to lie in spitting round a corner; when *that* was mastered, the pupil was entitled to his doctor's degree. Endless are the purposes of man, merely festal or merely comic, and aiming but at the momentary life of a cloud, which have earned for themselves the distinction and apparatus of a separate art. Yet for conversation, the great paramount purpose of social meetings, no art exists or has been attempted.

That seems strange, but is not really so. A limited process submits readily to the limits of a technical system; but a process so unlimited as the interchange of thought, seems to reject them. And even, if an art of conversation were less unlimited, the means of carrying such an art into practical effect amongst so vast a variety of minds, seems wanting. Yet again, perhaps, after all, this may rest on a mistake. What we begin by misjudging is the particular phasis of conversation which brings it under the control of art and discipline. It is not in its relation to the intellect

that conversation ever has been improved or *will* be improved primarily, but in its relation to manners. Has a man ever mixed with what in technical phrase is called "good company," meaning company in the highest degree polished, company which (being or *not* being aristocratic as respects its composition) is aristocratic as respects the standard of its manners and usages? If he really *has*, and does not deceive himself from vanity or from pure inacquaintance with the world, in that case he must have remarked the large effect impressed upon the grace and upon the freedom of conversation by a few simple instincts of real good breeding. Good breeding—what is it? There is no need in this place to answer that question comprehensively; it is sufficient to say that it is made up chiefly of *negative* elements; that it shows itself far less in what it prescribes than in what it forbids. Now, even under this limitation of the idea, the truth is—that more will be done for the benefit of conversation by the simple magic of good manners (that is, chiefly by a system of forbearances), applied to the besetting vices of social intercourse, than ever *was* or *can* be done by all varieties of intellectual power assembled upon the same arena. Intellectual graces of the highest order may perish and confound each other when exercised in a spirit of ill-temper, or under the license of bad manners; whereas, very humble powers, when allowed to expand themselves colloquially in that genial freedom which is possible only under the most absolute confidence in the self-restraint of your collocutors, accomplish their purpose to a certainty, if it be the ordinary purpose of liberal amusement, and have a chance of accomplishing it, even when this purpose is the more ambitious one of communicating knowledge or exchanging new views upon truth.

In my own early years, having been formed by nature too exclusively and morbidly for solitary thinking, I observed nothing. Seeming to have eyes, in reality I saw nothing. But it is a matter of no very uncommon experience—that, whilst the mere observers never became meditators, the mere meditators, on the other hand, may finally ripen into close observers. Strength of thinking, through long years, upon innumerable themes, will have the effect of disclosing a vast variety of questions, to which it soon becomes apparent that answers are lurking up and down the whole field of daily experience; and thus an external experience which was slighted in youth, because it was a dark cipher that could be read into no meaning, a key that answered to no lock, gradually becomes interesting as it is found to yield one solution after another to problems that have independently matured in the mind. Thus, for instance, upon the special functions of conversation, upon its powers, its laws, its ordinary diseases, and their appropriate remedies, in youth I never bestowed a thought or a care. I viewed it, not as one amongst the gay ornamental arts of the intellect, but as one amongst the dull necessities of business. Loving solitude too much, I understood the capacities of colloquial intercourse too little. And thus it is, though not for *my* reason, that most people estimate the intellectual relations of conversation. Let these, however, be what they may, one thing seemed undeniable—that this world talked a great deal too much. It would be better for all parties, if nine in every ten of the *winged words*, flying about in this world (Homer's *epea pteroenta*) had their feathers clipped amongst men, or even amongst women, who have a right to a larger allowance of words. Yet, as it was quite out of my power to persuade the world into any such self-denying reformation, it seemed equally out of

the line of my duties to nourish any moral anxiety in that direction. *To talk* seemed to me at that time in the same category as *to sleep;* not an accomplishment, but a base physical infirmity. As a moralist, I really was culpably careless upon the whole subject. I cared as little what absurdities men practised in their vast tennis-courts of conversation, where the ball is flying backwards and forwards to no purpose for ever, as what tricks Englishmen might play with their monstrous national debt. Yet at length what I disregarded on any principle of moral usefulness, I came to make an object of the profoundest interest on principles of art. *Betting*, in like manner, and *wagering* which apparently had no moral value, and for that reason had been always slighted as inconsiderable arts (though, by the way, they always had one valuable use, viz., that of evading quarrels, since a bet summarily intercepts an altercation), rose suddenly into a philosophic rank, when successively, Huygens, the Bernoullis, and De Moivre, were led by the suggestion of these trivial practices amongst men, to throw the light of a high mathematical analysis upon the whole doctrine of Chances. Lord Bacon had been led to remark the capacities of conversation as an organ for sharpening one particular mode of intellectual power. Circumstances, on the other hand, led me into remarking the special capacities of conversation, as an organ for absolutely creating another mode of power. Let a man have read, thought, studied, as much as he may, rarely will he reach his possible advantages as a *ready* man, unless he has exercised his powers much in conversation—that, I think, was Lord Bacon's idea. Now, this wise and useful remark points in a direction not objective, but subjective; that is, it does not promise any absolute extension to truth itself, but only some greater facilities to the man who ex-

pounds or diffuses the truth. Nothing will be done for truth objectively that would not at any rate be done; but subjectively it will be done with more fluency, and at less cost of exertion to the doer. On the contrary, my own growing reveries on the latent powers of conversation (which, though a thing that then I hated, yet challenged at times unavoidably my attention) pointed to an absolute birth of new insight into the truth itself, as inseparable from the finer and more scientific exercise of the talking art. It would not be the brilliancy, the ease, or the adroitness of the expounder that would benefit, but the absolute interests of the thing expounded. A feeling dawned on me of a secret magic lurking in the peculiar life, velocities, and contagious ardour of conversation, quite separate from any which belonged to books; arming a man with new forces, and not merely with a new dexterity in wielding the old ones. I felt, and in this I could not be mistaken, as too certainly it was a fact of my own experience, that in the electric kindling of life between two minds—and far less from the kindling natural to conflict (though *that* also is something), than from the kindling through sympathy with the object discussed, in its momentary coruscation of shifting phases—there sometimes arise glimpses, and shy revelations of affinity, suggestion, relation, analogy, that could not have been approached through any avenues of methodical study. Great organists find the same effect of inspiration, the same result of power creative and revealing, in the mere movement and velocity of their own voluntaries, like the heavenly wheels of Milton, throwing off fiery flakes and bickering flames; these *impromptu* torrents of music create rapturous *fioriture*, beyond all capacity in the artist to register, or afterwards to imitate. The reader must be well aware that many philosophic instances exist where a change in the

degree makes a change in the kind. Usually this is otherwise; the prevailing rule is, that the principle subsists unaffected by any possible variation in the amount or degree of the force. But a large class of exceptions must have met the reader, though, from want of a pencil, he has improperly omitted to write them down in his pocket-book—cases, viz., where upon passing beyond a certain point in the graduation, an alteration takes place suddenly in the *kind* of effect, a new direction is given to the power. Some illustration of this truth occurs in conversation, where a velocity in the movement of thought is made possible (and often natural), greater than ever can arise in methodical books; and where, *2dly*, approximations are more obvious and easily effected between things too remote for a steadier contemplation. One remarkable evidence of a *specific* power lying hid in conversation may be seen in such writings as have moved by impulses most nearly resembling those of conversation; for instance, in those of Edmund Burke. For one moment, reader, pause upon the spectacle of two contrasted intellects, Burke's and Johnson's: one an intellect essentially going forward, governed by the very necessity of growth—by the law of motion in advance; the latter, essentially an intellect retrogressive, retrospective, and throwing itself back on its own steps. This original difference was aided accidentally in Burke by the tendencies of political partisanship, which, both from moving amongst moving things and uncertainties, as compared with the more stationary aspects of moral philosophy, and also from its more fluctuating and fiery passions, must unavoidably reflect in greater life the tumultuary character of conversation. The result from these original differences of intellectual constitution, aided by these secondary differences of pursuit, is, that Dr. Johnson never, in any instance, GROWS a truth

before your eyes, whilst in the act of delivering it, or moving towards it. All that he offers up to the end of the chapter he had when he began. But to Burke, such was the prodigious elasticity of his thinking, equally in his conversation and in his writings, the mere act of movement became the principle or cause of movement. Motion propagated motion, and life threw off life. The very violence of a projectile, as thrown by *him*, caused it to rebound in fresh forms, fresh angles, splintering, coruscating, which gave out thoughts as new (and as startling) to himself as they are to his reader. In this power, which might be illustrated largely from the writings of Burke, is seen something allied to the powers of a prophetic seer, who is compelled oftentimes into seeing things, as unexpected by himself as by others. Now in conversation, considered as to its *tendencies* and capacities, there sleeps an intermitting spring of such sudden revelation, showing much of the same general character; a power putting on a character *essentially* differing from the character worn by the power of books.

If, then, in the *colloquial* commerce of thought, there lurked a power not shared by other modes of that great commerce, a power separate and *sui generis*, next it was apparent that a great art must exist somewhere, applicable to this power; not in the Pyramids, or in the tombs of Thebes, but in the unwrought quarries of men's minds, so many and so dark. There was an art missing. If an art, then an artist was missing. If the art (as we say of foreign mails) were "due," then the artist was "due." How happened it that this great man never made his appearance? But perhaps he *had*. Many persons think Dr. Johnson the *exemplar* of conversational power. I think otherwise, for reasons which I shall soon explain, and far sooner I should look for such an *exemplar* in Burke. But neither Johnson

nor Burke, however they might rank as *powers*, was the *artist* that I demanded. Burke valued not at all the reputation of a great performer in conversation; he scarcely contemplated the skill as having a real existence; and a man will never be an artist who does not value his art, or even recognise it as an object distinctly defined. Johnson, again, relied sturdily upon his natural powers for carrying him aggressively through all conversational occasions or difficulties that English society, from its known character and composition, could be supposed likely to bring forward, without caring for any art or system of rules that might give further effect to that power. If a man is strong enough to knock down ninety-nine in a hundred of all antagonists, in spite of any advantages as to pugilistic science, which they may possess over himself, he is not likely to care for the improbable case of a hundredth man appearing with strength equal to his own, superadded to the utmost excess of that artificial skill which is wanting in himself. Against such a contingency it is not worth while going to the cost of a regular pugilistic training. Half a century might not bring up a case of actual call for its application. Or, if it did, for a single *extra* case of that nature, there would always be a resource in the *extra* (and, strictly speaking, foul) arts of kicking, scratching, pinching, and tearing hair.

The conversational powers of Johnson were narrow in compass, however strong within their own essential limits. As a *conditio sine qua non*, he did not absolutely demand a *personal* contradictor by way of 'stoker' to supply fuel and keep up his steam, but he demanded at least a *subject* teeming with elements of known contradictory opinion, whether linked to partisanship or not. His views of all things tended to negation, never to

the positive and the creative. Hence may be explained a fact, which cannot have escaped any keen observer of those huge Johnsonian *memorabilia* which we possess, viz., that the gyration of his flight upon any one question that ever came before him was so exceedingly brief. There was no process, no evolution, no movements of self-conflict or preparation; a word, a distinction, a pointed antithesis, and, above all, a new abstraction of the logic involved in some popular fallacy, or doubt, or prejudice, or problem, formed the utmost of his efforts. He dissipated some casual perplexity that had gathered in the eddies of conversation, but he contributed nothing to any weightier interest; he unchoked a strangulated sewer in some blind alley, but what river is there that felt his cleansing power? There is no man that can cite any single error which Dr. Johnson unmasked, or any important truth which he expanded. Nor is this extraordinary. Dr. Johnson had not within himself the fountain of such power, having not a brooding or naturally philosophic intellect. Philosophy in any acquired sense he had none. How else could it have happened that, upon David Hartley, upon David Hume, upon Voltaire, upon Rousseau, the true or the false philosophy of his own day, beyond a personal sneer, founded on some popular slander, he had nothing to say and said nothing? A new world was moulding itself in Dr. Johnson's meridian hours, new generations were ascending, and "other palms were won." Yet of all this the Doctor suspected nothing. Countrymen and contemporaries of the Doctor's, brilliant men, but (as many think) trifling men, such as Horace Walpole and Lord Chesterfield, already in the middle of that eighteenth century, could read the signs of the great changes advancing, already they started in horror from the portents which rose before them in Paris, like the proces-

sion of regal phantoms before Macbeth, and have left in their letters records undeniable (such as now read like Cassandra prophecies) that already they had noticed tremors in the ground below their feet, and sounds in the air, running before the great convulsions under which Europe was destined to rock full thirty years later. Many instances, during the last war, showed us that in the frivolous dandy might often lurk the most fiery and accomplished of *aides-de-camp;* and these cases show that men, in whom the world sees only elegant *roués*, sometimes from carelessness, sometimes from want of opening for display, conceal qualities of penetrating sagacity, and a learned spirit of observation, such as may be looked for vainly in persons of more solemn and academic pretension. But there was a greater defect in Dr. Johnson for purposes of conversation than merely want of eye for the social phenomena rising around him. He had no eye for such phenomena, because he had a somnolent want of interest in them; and why? because he had little interest in man. Having no sympathy with human nature in its struggles, or faith in the progress of man, he could not be supposed to regard with much interest any forerunning symptoms of changes that to him were themselves indifferent. And the reason that he felt thus careless was the desponding taint in his blood. It is good to be of a melancholic temperament, as all the ancient physiologists held, but only if the melancholy is balanced by fiery aspiring qualities, not when it gravitates essentially to the earth. Hence the drooping, desponding character, and the monotony of the estimate which Dr. Johnson applied to life. We were all, in *his* view, miserable, scrofulous wretches; the "strumous diathesis" was developed in our flesh, or soon would be; and but for his piety, which was the best indication of some greatness latent within him,

he would have suggested to all mankind a nobler use for garters than any which regarded knees. In fact I believe, that but for his piety, he would not only have counselled hanging in general, but hanged himself in particular. Now this gloomy temperament, not as an occasional but as a permanent state, is fatal to the power of brilliant conversation, in so far as that power rests upon raising a continual succession of topics, and not merely of using with lifeless talent the topics offered by others. Man is the central interest about which revolve all the fleeting phenomena of life; these secondary interests demand the first; and with the little knowledge about them which must follow from little care about them, there can be no salient fountain of conversational themes. "*Pectus*," says Quintilian, "*id est quod disertum facit*:"—*The heart* (and not the brain) *is that which makes a man eloquent.* From the heart, from an interest of love or hatred, of hope or care, springs all permanent eloquence; and the elastic spring of conversation is gone, if the talker is a mere showy man of talent, pulling at an oar which he detests.

What an index might be drawn up of subjects interesting to human nature, and suggested by the events of the Johnsonian period, upon which the Doctor ought to have talked, and must have talked, if his interest in man had been catholic, but on which the Doctor is not recorded to nave uttered one word! Visiting Paris once in his whole life, he applied himself diligently to the measuring of what? Of gilt mouldings and diapered panels! Yet books, it will be said, suggest topics as well as life, and the moving sceneries of life; and surely Dr. Johnson had *this* fund to draw upon? No; for though he had read much in a desultory way, he had studied nothing;* and, without that

* "*Had studied nothing*:"—It may be doubted whether Dr.

sort of systematic reading, it is but a rare chance that books can be brought to bear effectually, and yet indirectly, upon conversation; whilst to make them directly and formally the subjects of discussion, pre-supposes either a learned audience, or, if the audience is not so, much pedantry and much arrogance in the talker.

THE flight of our human hours, not really more rapid at any one moment than another, yet oftentimes to our feelings *seems* more rapid, and this flight startles us like guilty things with a more affecting *sense* of its rapidity, when a distant church-clock strikes in the night-time, or when, upon some solemn summer evening, the sun's disc, after settling for a minute with farewell horizontal rays, suddenly drops out of sight. The record of our loss in such a case seems to us the first intimation of its possibility; as if we could not be made sensible that the hours were perishable until it is announced to us that already they have perished. We feel a perplexity of distress when that which seems to us the cruelest of injuries, a robbery committed upon our dearest possession by the conspiracy of the world outside, seems also as in part a robbery sanctioned by our own collusion. The world, and the customs of the world, never cease to

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Johnson understood any one thing thoroughly, except Latin; not that he understood even *that* with the elaborate and circumstantial accuracy required for the editing critically of a Latin classic. But if he had less than *that*, he also had more: He *possessed* that language in a way that no extent of mere critical knowledge could confer. He wrote it genially, not as one translating into it painfully from English, but as one using it for his original organ of thinking. And in Latin verse he expressed himself at times with the energy and freedom of a Roman. With Greek his acquaintance was far more slender.

levy taxes upon our time; that is true, and so far the blame is not ours; but the particular *degree* in which we suffer by this robbery depends much upon the weakness with which we ourselves become parties to the wrong, or the energy with which we resist it. Resisting or not, however, we are doomed to suffer a bitter pang as often as the irrecoverable flight of our time is brought home with keenness to our hearts. The spectacle of a lady floating over the sea in a boat, and waking suddenly from sleep to find her magnificent ropes of pearl-necklace, by some accident detached at one end from its fastenings, the loose string hanging down into the water, and pearl after pearl slipping off for ever into the abyss, brings before us the sadness of the case. That particular pearl, which at the very moment is rolling off into the unsearchable deeps, carries its own separate reproach to the lady's heart. But it is more deeply reproachful as the representative of so many others, uncounted pearls, that have already been swallowed up irrecoverably whilst she was yet sleeping, and of many beside that must follow, before any remedy can be applied to what we may call this jewelly hæmorrhage. A constant hæmorrhage of the same kind is wasting our jewelly hours. A day has perished from our brief calendar of days: and *that* we could endure; but this day is no more than the reiteration of many other days, days counted by thousands, that have perished to the same extent and by the same unhappy means, viz., the evil usages of the world made effectual and ratified by our own *lâcheté*. Bitter is the upbraiding which we seem to hear from a secret monitor—"My friend, you make very free with your days: pray, how many do you expect to have? What is your rental, as regards the total harvest of days which this life is likely to yield?" Let us consider. Threescore years and ten produce a total sum of 25,550 days;

to say nothing of some seventeen or eighteen more that will be payable to you as a *bonus* on account of leap years. Now, out of this total, one-third must be deducted at a blow for a single item, viz., sleep. Next, on account of illness, of recreation, and the serious occupations spread over the surface of life, it will be little enough to deduct another third. Recollect also that twenty years will have gone from the earlier end of your life (viz., above seven thousand days) before you can have attained any skill or system, or any definite purpose in the distribution of your time. Lastly, for that single item which, amongst the Roman armies, was indicated by the technical phrase "*corpus curare*," tendance on the animal necessities, viz., eating, drinking, washing, bathing, and exercise, deduct the smallest allowance consistent with propriety, and, upon summing up all these appropriations, you will not find so much as four thousand days left disposable for direct intellectual culture. Four thousand, or forty hundreds, will be a hundred forties; that is, according to the lax Hebrew method of indicating six weeks by the phrase of "forty days," you will have a hundred bills or drafts on Father Time, value six weeks each, as the whole period available for intellectual labour. A solid block of about eleven and a half continuous years is all that a long life will furnish for the development of what is most august in man's nature. After *that*, the night comes when no man can work; brain and arm will be alike unserviceable; or, if the life should be unusually extended, the vital powers will be drooping as regards all motions in advance.

Limited thus severely in his *direct* approaches to knowledge, and in his approaches to that which is a thousand times more important than knowledge, viz., the conduct and discipline of the knowing faculty, the more clamorous is the

necessity that a wise man should turn to account any INDIRECT and supplementary means towards the same ends; and amongst these means a chief one by right and potentially is CONVERSATION. Even the primary means, books, study, and meditation, through errors from without and errors from within, are not *that* which they might be made. Too constantly, when reviewing his own efforts for improvement, a man has reason to say (indignantly, as one injured by others; penitentially, as contributing to this injury himself), "Much of my studies have been thrown away; many books which were useless, or worse than useless, I have read; many books which ought to have been read, I have left unread; such is the sad necessity under the absence of all preconceived plan; and the proper road is first ascertained when the journey is drawing to its close." In a wilderness so vast as that of books, to go astray often and widely is pardonable, because it is inevitable; and in proportion as the errors on this primary field of study have been great, it is important to have reaped some compensatory benefits on the secondary field of conversation. Books teach by one machinery, conversation by another; and, if these resources were trained into correspondence to their own separate ideals, they might become reciprocally the complements of each other. The false selection of books, for instance, might often be rectified at once by the frank collation of experiences which takes place in miscellaneous colloquial intercourse. But other and greater advantages belong to conversation for the effectual promotion of intellectual culture. Social discussion supplies the natural integration for the deficiencies of private and sequestered study. Simply to rehearse, simply to express in words amongst familiar friends, one's own intellectual perplexities, is oftentimes to clear them up. It is well known that the

best means of learning is by teaching; the effort that is made for others is made eventually for ourselves; and the readiest method of illuminating obscure conceptions, or maturing such as are crude, lies in an earnest effort to make them apprehensible by others. Even this is but one amongst the functions fulfilled by conversation. Each separate individual in a company is likely to see any problem or idea under some difference of angle. Each may have some difference of views to contribute, derived either from a different course of reading, or a different tenor of reflection, or perhaps a different train of experience. The advantages of colloquial discussion are not only often commensurate in *degree* to those of study, but they recommend themselves also as being different in *kind;* they are special and *sui generis*. It must, therefore, be important that so great an organ of intellectual development should not be neutralized by mismanagement, as generally it is, or neglected through insensibility to its latent capacities. The importance of the subject should be measured by its relation to the interests of the intellect; and on this principle we do not scruple to think that, in reviewing our own experience of the causes most commonly at war with the free movement of conversation as it ought to be, we are in effect contributing hints for a new chapter in any future 'Essay on the Improvement of the Mind.' Watt's book under that title is really of little practical use, nor would it ever have been thought so had it not been patronized, in a spirit of partisanship, by a particular section of religious dissenters. Wherever *that* happens, the fortune of a book is made; for the sectarian impulse creates a sensible current in favour of the book; and the general or neutral reader yields passively to the motion of the current, without knowing or caring to know whence it is derived.

Our remarks must of necessity be cursory here, so that they will not need or permit much preparation; but one distinction, which is likely to strike on some minds, as to the two different purposes of conversation, ought to be noticed, since otherwise it will seem doubtful whether we have not confounded them; or, secondly, if we have *not* confounded them, which of the two it is that our remarks contemplate. In speaking above of conversation, we have fixed our view on those uses of conversation which are ministerial to intellectual culture; but, in relation to the majority of men, conversation is far less valuable as an organ of intellectual culture than of social enjoyment. For one man interested in conversation as a means of advancing his studies, there are fifty men whose interest in conversation points exclusively to convivial pleasure. This, as being a more extensive function of conversation, is so far the more dignified function; whilst, on the other hand, such a purpose as direct mental improvement seems by its superior gravity to challenge the higher rank. Yet, in fact, even here the more general purpose of conversation takes precedency; for when dedicated to the objects of festal delight, conversation rises by its tendency to the rank of a fine art. It is true that not one man in a million rises to any distinction in this art; nor, whatever France may conceit of herself, has any one nation, amongst other nations, a real precedency in this art. The artists are rare indeed; but still the art, as distinguished from the artist, may, by its difficulties, by the quality of its graces, and by the range of its possible brilliances, take rank as a *fine* art; or, at all events, according to its powers of execution, it tends to that rank; whereas the best order of conversation that is simply ministerial to a purpose of use, cannot pretend to a higher name than that of a *mechanic* art. But these distinctions, though they

would form the grounds of a separate treatment in a regular treatise on conversation, may be practically neglected on this occasion, because the hints offered, by the generality of the terms in which they express themselves, may be applied indifferently to either class of conversation. The main diseases, indeed, which obstruct the healthy movement of conversation, recur everywhere; and alike whether the object be pleasure or profit in the free interchange of thought, almost universally that free interchange is obstructed in the very same way, by the very same defect of any controlling principle for sustaining the general rights and interests of the company, and by the same vices of self-indulgent indolence, or of callous selfishness, or of insolent vanity, in the individual talkers.

Let us fall back on the recollections of our own experience. In the course of our life we have heard much of what was reputed to be the select conversation of the day, and we have heard many of those who figured at the moment as effective talkers; yet in mere sincerity, and without a vestige of misanthropic retrospect, we must say, that never once has it happened to us to come away from any display of that nature without intense disappointment; and it always appeared to us that this failure (which soon ceased to be a *disappointment*) was inevitable by a necessity of the case. For here lay the stress of the difficulty: almost all depends in most trials of skill, upon the parity of those who are matched against each other. An ignorant person supposes that, to an able disputant, it must be an advantage to have a feeble opponent; whereas, on the contrary, it is ruin to him; for he cannot display his own powers but through something of a corresponding power in the resistance of his antagonist. A brilliant fencer is lost and confounded in playing with a novice; and the same thing takes place in

playing at bull, or battledore, or in dancing, where a powerless partner does not enable you to shine the more, but reduces you to mere helplessness, and takes the wind altogether out of your sails. Now, if by some rare good luck the great talker—the protagonist—of the evening has been provided with a commensurate second, it is just possible that something like a brilliant "passage of arms" may be the result, though much, even in that case, will depend on the chances of the moment for furnishing a fortunate theme; and even then, amongst the superior part of the company, a feeling of deep vulgarity and of mountebank display is inseparable from such an ostentatious duel of wit. On the other hand, supposing your great talker to be received like any other visitor, and turned loose upon the company, then he must do one of two things; either he will talk upon *outré* subjects specially tabooed to his own private use, in which case the great man has the air of a quack-doctor addressing a mob from a street stage; or else he will talk like ordinary people upon popular topics; in which case the company, out of natural politeness, that they may not seem to be staring at him as a lion, will hasten to meet him in the same style, the conversation will become general, the great man will seem reasonable and well-bred; but at the same time we grieve to say it, the great man will have been extinguished by being drawn off from his exclusive ground. The dilemma, in short, is this: if the great talker attempts the plan of showing off by firing cannon-shot when everybody else is content with musketry, then undoubtedly he produces an impression, but at the expense of insulating himself from the sympathies of the company, and standing aloof as a sort of monster hired to play tricks of funambulism for the night. Yet again, if he contents himself with a musket like other people, then for *us*, from whom he mo-

dextly hides his talent under a bushel, in what respect is he different from the man who *has* no such talent?

> "If she be not fair to me,
> What care I how fair she be?"

The reader, therefore, may take it upon the *à priori* logic of this dilemma, or upon the evidence of our own experience, that all reputation for brilliant talking is a visionary thing, and rests upon a sheer impossibility, viz., upon such a histrionic performance in a state of insulation from the rest of the company as could not be effected, even for a single time, without a rare and difficult collusion, and could not, even for that single time, be endurable to a man of delicate and honourable sensibilities.

Yet surely Coleridge *had* such a reputation, and without needing any collusion at all; for Coleridge, unless he could have all the talk, would have none. But then this was not conversation. It was not *colloquium*, or talking *with* the company, but *alloquium*, or talking *to* the company. As Madame de Staël observed, Coleridge talked, and *could* talk, only by monologue. Such a mode of systematic trespass upon the conversational rights of a whole party, gathered together under pretence of amusement, is fatal to every purpose of social intercourse, whether that purpose be connected with direct use and the service of the intellect, or with the general graces and amenities of life. The result is the same, under whatever impulse such an outrage is practised; but the impulse is not always the same; it varies, and so far the criminal intention varies. In some people this gross excess takes its rise in pure arrogance. They are fully aware of their own intrusion upon the general privileges of the company; they are aware of the temper in which it is likely to be received; but they persist wilfully in the wrong, as a sort of homage levied compulsorily

upon those who may wish to resist it, but hardly *can* do so without a violent interruption, wearing the same shape of indecorum as that which they resent. In most people, however, it is not arrogance which prompts this capital offence against social rights, but a blind selfishness, yielding passively to its own instincts, without being distinctly aware of the degree in which this self-indulgence trespasses on the rights of others. We see the same temper illustrated at times in travelling; a brutal person, as we are disposed at first to pronounce him, but more frequently one who yields unconsciously to a lethargy of selfishness, plants himself at the public fireplace, so as to exclude his fellow-travellers from all but a fraction of the warmth. Yet he does not do this in a spirit of wilful aggression upon others; he has but a glimmering suspicion of the odious shape which his own act assumes to others, for the luxurious torpor of self-indulgence has extended its mists to the energy and clearness of his perceptions. Meantime, Coleridge's habit of soliloquizing through a whole evening of four or five hours, had its origin neither in arrogance nor in absolute selfishness. The fact was that he *could* not talk unless he were uninterrupted, and unless he were able to count upon this concession from the company. It was a silent contract between him and his hearers, that nobody should speak but himself. If any man objected to this arrangement, why did he come? For the custom of the place, the *lex loci*, being notorious, by coming at all he was understood to profess his allegiance to the autocrat who presided. It was not, therefore, by an insolent usurpation that Coleridge persisted in monology through his whole life, but in virtue of a concession from the kindness and respect of his friends. You could not be angry with him for using his privilege, for it was a privilege conferred by others, and a privilege which

he was ready to resign as soon as any man demurred to it. But though reconciled to it by these considerations, and by the ability with which he used it, you could not but feel that it worked ill for all parties. Himself it tempted oftentimes into pure garrulity of egotism, and the listeners it reduced to a state of debilitated sympathy or of absolute torpor. Prevented by the custom from putting questions, from proposing doubts, from asking for explanations, reacting by no mode of mental activity, and condemned also to the mental distress of hearing opinions or doctrines stream past them by flights which they must not arrest for a moment, so as even to take a note of them, and which yet they could not often understand, or, seeming to understand, could not always approve, the audience sank at times into a listless condition of inanimate vacuity. To be acted upon for ever, but never to react, is fatal to the very powers by which sympathy must grow, or by which intelligent admiration can be evoked. For his own sake, it was Coleridge's interest to have forced his hearers into the active commerce of question and answer, of objection and demur. Not otherwise was it possible that even the attention could be kept from drooping, or the coherency and dependency of the arguments be forced into light.

The French rarely make a mistake of this nature. The graceful levity of the nation could not easily err in this direction, nor tolerate such deliration in the greatest of men. Not the gay temperament only of the French people, but the particular qualities of the French language, which (however poor for the higher purposes of passion) is rich beyond all others for purposes of social intercourse, prompt them to rapid and vivacious exchange of thought. Tediousness, therefore, above all other vices, finds no countenance or indulgence amongst the French, excepting always in two

memorable cases, viz., first, the case of tragic dialogue on the stage, which is privileged to be tedious by usage and tradition; and, secondly, the case (authorized by the best usages in living society) of narrators or *raconteurs*. This is a shocking anomaly in the code of French good taste as applied to conversation. Of all the bores whom man in his folly hesitates to hang, and Heaven in its mysterious wisdom suffers to propagate their species, the most insufferable is the teller of "good stories"—a nuisance that should be put down by cudgelling, a submersion in horse-ponds, or any mode of abatement, as summarily as men would combine to suffocate a vampire or a mad dog. This case excepted, however, the French have the keenest possible sense of all that is odious and all that is ludicrous in prosing, and universally have a horror of *des longeurs*. It is not strange, therefore, that Madame de Staël noticed little as extraordinary in Coleridge beyond this one capital monstrosity of unlimited soliloquy, that being a peculiarity which she never could have witnessed in France; and, considering the burnish of her French tastes in all that concerned colloquial characteristics, it is creditable to her forbearance that she noticed even this rather as a memorable fact than as the inhuman fault which it was. On the other hand, Coleridge was not so forbearing as regarded the brilliant French lady. He spoke of her to ourselves as a very frivolous person, and in short summary terms that disdained to linger on a subject so inconsiderable. It is remarkable that Goethe and Schiller both conversed with Madame de Staël, like Coleridge, and both spoke of her afterwards in the same disparaging terms as Coleridge. But it is equally remarkable that Baron *William* Humboldt, who was personally acquainted with all the four parties—Madame de Staël, Goethe, Schiller, and Coleridge—gave it as his opi-

nion (in letters subsequently published) that the lady had been calumniated through a very ignoble cause, viz., mere ignorance of the French language, or, at least, non-familiarity with the fluencies of *oral* French. Neither Goethe nor Schiller, though well acquainted with written French, had any command of it for purposes of *rapid* conversation; and Humboldt supposes that mere spite at the trouble which they found in limping after the lady so as to catch one thought that she uttered, had been the true cause of their unfavourable sentence upon her. Not malice aforethought, so much as vindictive fury for the sufferings they had endured, accounted for their severity in the opinion of the diplomatic baron. He did not extend the same explanation to Coleridge's case, because, though even then in habits of intercourse with Coleridge, he had not heard of *his* interview with the lady, nor of the results from that interview; else what was true of the two German wits was true *à fortiori* of Coleridge: the Germans at least *read* French and talked it slowly, and occasionally understood it when talked by others. But Coleridge did none of these things. We are all of us well aware that Madame de Staël was *not* a trifler; nay, that she gave utterance at times to truths as worthy to be held oracular as any that were uttered by the three inspired wits, all philosophers, and bound to truth; but all poets, and privileged to be wayward. This we may collect from these anecdotes, that people accustomed to colloquial despotism, and who wield a sceptre within a circle of their own, are no longer capable of impartial judgments, and do not accommodate themselves with patience, or even with justice, to the pretensions of rivals; and were it only for this result of conversational tyranny, it calls clamorously for extinction by some combined action upon the part of society.

Is such a combination on the part of society possible as a sustained effort? We imagine that it *is* in these times, and will be more so in the times which are coming. Formerly the social meetings of men and women, except only in capital cities, were few; and even in such cities the infusion of female influence was not broad and powerful enough for the correction of those great aberrations from just ideals which disfigured social intercourse. But great changes are proceeding: were it only by the vast revolution in our *means* of intercourse, laying open every village to the contagion of social temptations, the world of western Europe is tending more and more to a mode of living in public. Under such a law of life, conversation becomes a vital interest of every hour, that can no more suffer interruption from individual caprice or arrogance than the animal process of respiration from transient disturbances of health. Once, when travelling was rare, there was no fixed law for the usages of public rooms in inns or coffee-houses; the courtesy of individuals was the tenure by which men held their rights. If a morose person detained the newspaper for hours, there was no remedy. At present, according to the circumstances of the case, there are strict regulations, which secure to each individual his own share of the common rights.

A corresponding change will gradually take place in the usages which regulate conversation. It will come to be considered an infringement of the general rights for any man to detain the conversation, or arrest its movement, for more than a short space of time, which gradually will be more and more defined. This one curtailment of arrogant pretensions will lead to others. Egotism will no longer freeze the openings to intellectual discussions; and conversation will then become, what it never *has* been before, a

powerful ally of education and generally of self-culture. The main diseases that besiege conversation at present are —1*st*, The want of *timing*. Those who are not recalled, by a sense of courtesy and equity, to the continual remembrance that, in appropriating too large a share of the conversation, they are committing a fraud upon their companions, are beyond all control of monitory hints or of reproof, which does not take a direct and open shape of personal remonstrance; but this, where the purpose of the assembly is festive and convivial, bears too harsh an expression for most people's feelings. That objection, however, would not apply to any mode of admonition that was universally established. A public memento carries with it no personality. For instance, in the Roman law-courts, no advocate complained of the *clepsydra*, or water time-piece, which regulated the duration of his pleadings. Now such a contrivance would not be impracticable at an after-dinner talk. To invert the clepsydra, when all the water had run out, would be an act open to any one of the guests, and liable to no misconstruction, when this check was generally applied, and understood to be a simple expression of public defence, not of private rudeness or personality. The clepsydra ought to be filled with some brilliantly-coloured fluid, to be placed in the centre of the table, and with the capacity, at the very most, of the little minute-glasses used for regulating the boiling of eggs. It would obviously be insupportably tedious to turn the glass every two or three minutes; but to do so occasionally would avail as a sufficient memento to the company. 2*d*, Conversation suffers from the want of some discretional power, lodged in an individual for controlling its movements. Very often it sinks into flats of insipidity through mere accident. Some trifle has turned its current upon ground, where few of the

company have anything to say—the commerce of thought languishes; and the consciousness that it *is* languishing about a narrow circle, "unde pedem proferre pudor vetat," operates for the general refrigeration of the company. Now the ancient Greeks had an officer appointed over every convivial meeting, whose functions applied to all cases of doubt or interruption that could threaten the genial harmony, or, perhaps, the genial movement intellectually, of the company. We also have such officers, presidents, vice-presidents, &c.; and we need only to extend their powers so that they may exercise over the movement of the conversation the beneficial influence of the Athenian *symposiarch*. At present the evil is, that conversation has no authorized originator; it is servile to the accidents of the moment, and generally these accidents are merely verbal. Some word or some name is dropped casually in the course of an illustration; and *that* is allowed to suggest a topic, though neither interesting to the majority of the persons present, nor leading naturally into other collateral topics, that are more so. Now in such cases it will be the business of the symposiarch to restore the interest of the conversation, and to rekindle its animation, by recalling it from any tracks of dulness or sterility into which it may have rambled. The natural *excursiveness* of colloquial intercourse, its tendency to advance by subtle links of association, is one of its advantages; but mere *vagrancy* from passive acquiescence in the direction given to it by chance or by any verbal accident, is amongst its worst diseases. The business of the symposiarch will be, to watch these morbid tendencies, which are not the deviations of graceful freedom, but the distortions of imbecility and collapse. His business it will also be, to derive occasions of discussion bearing a general and permanent interest from the fleeting

events or the casual disputes of the day. His business again it will be to bring back a subject that has been imperfectly discussed, and has yielded but half of the interest which it promises, under the interruption of any accident which may have carried the thoughts of the company into less attractive channels. Lastly, it should be an express office of education to form a particular style, cleansed from *verbiage*, from elaborate parenthesis, and from circumlocution,* as the only style fitted for a purpose which is one of pure enjoyment, and where every moment used by the speaker is deducted from a public stock.

Many other suggestions for the improvement of conversation might be brought forward within ampler limits; and especially for that class of conversation which moves by discussion, a whole code of regulations might be proposed that would equally promote the interests of the individual speakers, and the public interests of the truth involved in the question discussed. Meantime nobody is more aware than we are that no style of conversation is more essentially vulgar than that which moves by disputation. This is the vice of the young and the inexperienced, but especially of those amongst them who are fresh from academic life. But discussion is not necessarily disputation; and the two orders of conversation—*that*, on the one hand, which contemplates an interest of knowledge, and of the self-developing intellect; *that*, on the other hand, which forms one and the widest amongst the gay embellishments of life—will always advance together. Whatever there may remain of illiberal in the first (for, according to the remark of

* *Circumlocution* and *parenthesis* agree in this—that they keep the attention in a painful condition of suspense. But suspense is anxiety.

Burke, there is always something illiberal in the severer aspects of study until balanced by the influence of social amenities), will correct itself, or will tend to correct itself, by the model held up in the second; and thus the great organ of social intercourse, by means of speech, which hitherto has done little for man, except through the channel of its ministrations to the direct *business* of daily necessities, will at length rise into a rivalship with books, and become fixed amongst the alliances of intellectual progress, not less than amongst the ornamental accomplishments of convivial life.

PRESENCE OF MIND:

A FRAGMENT.

THE Roman *formula* for summoning an earnest concentration of the faculties upon any object whatever, that happened to be critically urgent, was *Hoc age*, "Mind *this!*" or, in other words, do not mind *that*. The antithetic formula was "*aliud* agere," to mind something alien, or remote from the interest then clamouring for attention. Our modern military orders of "*Attention!*" and "*Eyes straight!*" were both included in the *Hoc age*. In the stern peremptoriness of this Roman formula, we read a picturesque expression of the Roman character both as to its strength and its weakness—of the energy which brooked no faltering or delay (for beyond all other races the Roman was *natus rebus agendis*)—and also of the morbid craving for action, which was intolerant of anything but the intensely practical.

In modern times, it is we of the Anglo-Saxon blood, that is, the British and the Americans of the United States, who inherit the Roman temperament with its vices and its fearful advantages of power. In the ancient Roman these vices appeared more barbarously conspicuous. We, the countrymen of Lord Bacon and Sir Isaac Newton, and at one time the leaders of austere thinking, cannot be supposed to shrink from the speculative through any native incapacity for

sounding its depths. But the Roman had a real inaptitude for the speculative; to *him* nothing was real that was not practical. He had no metaphysics; he wanted the metaphysical instinct. It is a strange distinction amongst races and nations, that of men having a literature—the Roman, and the Roman only, had no metaphysics. There was no school of *native* Roman philosophy: the Roman was merely an eclectic or *dilettante*, picking up the crumbs which fell from Grecian tables; and even mathematics was so repulsive in its sublimer aspects to the Roman mind, that the very word Mathematics had in Rome collapsed into another name for the dotages of astrology. The mathematician was a mere variety of expression for the wizard or the conjuror.

From this unfavourable aspect of the Roman intellect, it is but justice that we should turn way to contemplate those situations in which that same intellect showed itself preternaturally strong. To face a sudden danger by a corresponding weight of sudden counsel or sudden evasion—*that* was a privilege essentially lodged in the Roman mind. But in every nation some minds much more than others are representative of the national type: they are normal minds, reflecting, as in a focus, the characteristics of the race. Thus Louis XIV. has been held to be the idealized expression of the French character; and amongst the Romans there cannot be a doubt that the first Cæsar offers in a rare perfection the revelation of that peculiar grandeur which belonged to the children of Romulus.

What *was* that grandeur? We do not need, in this place, to attempt its analysis. One feature will suffice for our purpose. The late celebrated John Foster, in his essay on Decision of Character, amongst the accidents of life which might serve to strengthen the natural tendencies to such a character, or to promote its development, rightly insists on

desertion. To find itself in solitude, and still more to find itself thrown upon that state of abandonment by sudden treachery, crushes the feeble mind, but rouses a terrific reaction of haughty self-assertion in that order of spirits which matches and measures itself against difficulty and danger. There is something corresponding to this case of human treachery in the sudden caprices of fortune. A danger, offering itself unexpectedly in some momentary change of blind external agencies, assumes to the feelings the character of a perfidy accomplished by mysterious powers, and calls forth something of the same resentment, and in a gladiatorial intellect something of the same spontaneous resistance. A sword that breaks in the very crisis of a duel, a horse killed by a flash of lightning in the moment of collision with the enemy, a bridge carried away by an avalanche at the instant of a commencing retreat, affect the feelings like dramatic incidents emanating from a human will. This man they confound and paralyse, that man they rouse into resistance as by a personal provocation and insult. And if it happens that these opposite effects show themselves in cases wearing a national importance, they raise what would else have been a mere casualty, into the tragic or the epic grandeur of a fatality. The superb character, for instance, of Cæsar's intellect, throws a colossal shadow as of predestination over the most trivial incidents of his career. On the morning of Pharsalia, every man who reads a record of that mighty event feels, by a secret instinct,* that an earthquake is approaching which must determine the

* "*Feels by a secret instinct.*"—A sentiment of this nature is finely expressed by Lucan in the passage beginning, "Advenisse diem," &c. The circumstance by which Lucan chiefly defeats the grandeur and simplicities of the truth, is the monstrous numerical exaggeration of the combatants and the killed at Pharsalia.

final distribution of the ground, and the relations amongst the whole family of man through a thousand generations. Precisely the inverse case is realized in some modern sections of history, where the feebleness or the inertia of the presiding intellect communicates a character of triviality to events that otherwise are of paramount historical importance. In Cæsar's case, simply through the perfection of his preparations arrayed against all conceivable contingencies, there is an impression left as of some incarnate Providence, veiled in a human form, ranging through the ranks of the legions; whilst, on the contrary, in the modern cases to which we allude, a mission, seemingly authorized by inspiration, is suddenly quenched, like a torch falling into water, by the careless character of the superintending intellect. Neither case is without its appropriate interest. The spectacle of a vast historical dependency, pre-organized by an intellect of unusual grandeur, wears the grace of congruity and reciprocal proportion. And, on the other hand, a series of mighty events contingent upon the motion this way or that of a frivolous hand, or suspended on the breath of caprice, suggests the wild and fantastic disproportions of ordinary life, when the mighty masquerade moves on for ever through successions of the gay and the solemn—of the petty and the majestic.

Cæsar's cast of character owed its impressiveness to the combination which it offered of moral grandeur and monumental immobility, such as we see in Marius, with the dazzling intellectual versatility found in the Gracchi, in Sylla, in Catiline, in Antony. The comprehension and the absolute perfection of his prescience did not escape the eye of Lucan, who describes him as "Nil actum reputans, si quid superesset agendum." A fine lambent gleam of his character escapes also in that magnificent fraction of a like,

where he is described as one incapable of learning the style and sentiments suited to a private interest—"Indocilis privata loqui."

There has been a disposition manifested amongst modern writers to disturb the traditional characters of Cæsar and his chief antagonist. Audaciously to disparage Cæsar, and without a shadow of any new historic grounds to exalt his feeble competitor, has been adopted as the best chance for filling up the mighty gulf between them. Lord Brougham, for instance, on occasion of a dinner given by the Cinque Ports at Dover to the Duke of Wellington, vainly attempted to raise our countryman by unfounded and romantic depreciations of Cæsar. He alleged that Cæsar had contended only with barbarians. Now, *that* happens to be the literal truth as regards Pompey. The victories on which his early reputation was built were won from semi-barbarians—luxurious, it is true, but also effeminate in a degree never suspected at Rome until the next generation. The slight but summary contest of Cæsar with Pharnaces, the son of Mithridates, dissipated at once the cloud of ignorance in which Rome had been involved on this subject by the vast distance and the total want of familiarity with Oriental habits. But Cæsar's chief antagonists, those whom Lord Brougham specially indicated, viz., the Gauls, were *not* barbarians. As a military people they were in a stage of civilisation next to that of the Romans. They were quite as much *aguerris*, hardened and seasoned to war, as the children of Rome. In certain military habits they were even superior. For purposes of war four races were then pre-eminent in Europe, viz., the Romans, the Macedonians, certain select tribes amongst the mixed population of the Spanish peninsula, and finally the Gauls. These were all open to the recruiting-parties of Cæsar; and amongst them

all he had deliberately assigned his preference to the Gauls. The famous legion, who carried the *Alauda* (the lark) upon their helmets, was raised in Gaul from Cæsar's private funds. They composed a select and favoured division in his army, and, together with the famous tenth legion, constituted a third part of his forces—a third numerically on the day of battle, but virtually a half. Even the rest of Cæsar's army had been for so long a space recruited in the Gauls, Transalpine as well as Cisalpine, that at Pharsalia the bulk of his forces is known to have been Gaulish. There were more reasons than one for concealing that fact. The policy of Cæsar was, to conceal it not less from Rome than from the army itself. But the truth became known at last to all wary observers. Lord Brougham's objection to the quality of Cæsar's enemies falls away at once when it is collated with the deliberate composition of Cæsar's own army. Besides that, Cæsar's enemies were *not* in any exclusive sense Gauls. The German tribes, the Spanish, the Helvetian, the Illyrian, Africans of every race, and Moors; the islanders of the Mediterranean, and the mixed populations of Asia, had all been faced by Cæsar. And if it is alleged that the forces of Pompey, however superior in numbers, were at Pharsalia largely composed of an Asiatic rabble, the answer is, that precisely of such a rabble were the hostile armies composed from which he had won his laurels. False and windy reputations are sown thickly in history; but never was there a reputation more thoroughly histrionic than that of Pompey. The late Dr. Arnold of Rugby, amongst a million of other crotchets, did (it is true) make a pet of Pompey; and he was encouraged in this caprice (which had for its origin the doctor's *political**

* It is very evident that Dr. Arnold could not have understood the position of politics in Rome, when he allowed himself to make a

animosity to Cæsar) by one military critic, viz., Sir William Napier. This distinguished soldier conveyed messages to Dr. Arnold warning him against the popular notion, that Pompey was a poor strategist. Now, had there been any Roman state-paper office, which Sir William could be supposed to have searched and weighed against the statements of surviving history, we might, in deference to Sir William's great experience and talents, have consented to a rehearing of the case. Unfortunately, no new materials have been discovered; nor is it alleged that the old ones are capable of being thrown into new combinations, so as to reverse or to suspend the old adjudications. The judgment of history stands; and amongst the records which it involves, none is more striking than this—that, whilst Cæsar and

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favourite of Pompey. The doctor hated aristocrats as he hated the gates of Erebus. Now Pompey was not only the leader of a most selfish aristocracy, but also their tool. Secondly, as if this were not bad enough, that section of the aristocracy to which he had dedicated his services was an odious oligarchy; and to this oligarchy, again, though nominally its head, he was in effect the most submissive of tools. Cæsar, on the other hand, if a democrat in the sense of working by democratic agencies, was bending all his efforts to the reconstruction of a new, purer, and enlarged aristocracy, no longer reduced to the necessity of buying and selling the people in mere self-defence. The everlasting war of bribery, operating upon universal poverty, the internal disease of Roman society, would have been redressed by Cæsar's measures, and *was* redressed according to the degree in which those measures were really brought into action. New judicatures were wanted, new judicial laws, a new aristocracy, by slow degrees a new people, and the right of suffrage exercised within new restrictions—all these things were needed for the cleansing of Rome; and that Cæsar would have accomplished this labour of Hercules was the true cause of his assassination. The scoundrels of the oligarchy felt their doom to be approaching. It was the just remark of Napoleon, that Brutus (but still more, we may say, Cicero), though falsely accredited as a patriot, was, in fact, the most exclusive and the most selfish of aristocrats.

Pompey were equally assaulted by sudden surprises, the first invariably met the sudden danger (sudden but never unlooked-for) by counter resources of evasion. He showed a new front as often as his situation exposed a new peril. At Pharsalia, where the cavalry of Pompey was far superior to his own, he anticipated and was in full readiness for the particular manœuvre by which it was attempted to make this superiority available against himself. By a new formation of his troops he foiled the attack, and caused it to recoil upon the enemy. Had Pompey then no rejoinder ready for meeting this reply? No. His one arrow being shot, his quiver was exhausted. Without an effort at parrying any longer, the mighty game was surrendered as desperate. "Check to the king!" was heard in silent submission; and no further stratagem was invoked, even in silent prayer, but the stratagem of flight. Yet Cæsar himself, objects a celebrated doctor (viz., Bishop Warburton), was reduced by his own rashness at Alexandria to a condition of peril and embarrassment not less alarming than the condition of Pompey at Pharsalia. How far this surprise might be reconcilable with Cæsar's military credit, is a question yet undecided; but this at least is certain, that he was equal to the occasion; and, if the surprise was all but fatal, the evasion was all but miraculous. Many were the sudden surprises which Cæsar had to face before and after this—on the shores of Britain, at Marseilles, at Munda, at Thapsus—from all of which he issued triumphantly, failing only as to that final one from which he had in pure nobility of heart announced his determination to shelter himself under no precautions.

Such cases of personal danger and escape are exciting to the imagination, from the disproportion between the interests of an individual and the interests of a whole nation,

which for the moment happen to be concurrent. The death or the escape of Cæsar, at one moment rather than another, would make a difference in the destiny of the human race. And in kind, though not in degree, the same interest has frequently attached to the fortunes of a prince or military leader. Effectually the same dramatic character belongs to any struggle with sudden danger, though not (like Cæsar's) successful. That it was *not* successful, becomes a new reason for pursuing it with interest; since equally in that result, as in one more triumphant, we read the altered course by which history is henceforward destined to flow.

For instance, how much depended—what a weight of history hung in suspense, upon the evasions, or attempts at evasion, of Charles I. He was a prince of great ability; and yet it confounds us to observe, with how little of foresight, or of circumstantial inquiry, either as regarded things or persons, he entered upon these difficult enterprises of escape from the vigilance of military guardians. His first escape, viz., that into the Scottish camp before Newark, was not surrounded with any circumstances of difficulty. His second escape from Hampton Court had become a matter of more urgent policy, and was proportionally more difficult of execution. He was attended on that occasion by two gentlemen (Berkely and Ashburnham), upon whose qualities of courage and readiness, and upon whose acquaintance with the accidents, local or personal, that surrounded their path, all was staked. Yet one of these gentlemen was always suspected of treachery, and both were imbecile as regarded that sort of wisdom on which it was possible for a royal person to rely. Had the questions likely to arise been such as belong to a masquerading adventure, these gentlemen might have been qualified for the situation. As it was, they sank in mere distraction under the responsi-

bilities of the occasion. The king was as yet in safety. At Lord Southampton's country mansion, he enjoyed the protection of a loyal family ready to face any risk in his behalf; and his retreat was entirely concealed. Suddenly this scene changes. The military commander in the Isle of Wight is *gratuitously* made acquainted with the king's situation, and brought into his presence, together with a military guard, though no effort had been made to exact securities from his honour in behalf of the king. His single object was evidently to arrest the king. His military honour, his duty to the Parliament, his private interest, all pointed to the same result, viz., the immediate apprehension of the fugitive prince. What was there in the opposite scale to set against these notorious motions? Simply the fact that he was nephew to the king's favourite chaplain, Dr. Hammond. What rational man, in a case of that nature, would have relied upon so poor a trifle? Yet even this inconsiderable bias was much more than balanced by another of the same kind, but in the opposite direction. Colonel Hammond was nephew to the king's chaplain; so far but in the meantime he was the husband of Cromwell's niece; and upon Cromwell privately, and the whole faction of the Independents politically, he relied for all his hopes of advancement. The result was, that, from mere inertia of mind and criminal negligence in his two attendants, the poor king had run right into the custody of the very jailer whom his enemies would have selected by preference.

Thus, then, from fear of being made a prisoner, Charles had quietly walked into the military rat-trap of Carisbrook Castle. The very security of this prison, however, might throw the governor off his guard. Another escape might be possible; and again an escape was arranged. It reads like some leaf torn from the records of a lunatic hospital,

to hear its circumstances and the particular point upon which it foundered. Charles was to make his exit through a window. This window, however, was fenced by iron bars; and these bars had been to a certain extent eaten through with *aquafortis*. The king had succeeded in pushing his head through, and upon that result he relied for his escape; for he connected this trial with the following strange maxim or postulate, viz., that wheresoever the head could pass, there the whole person could pass. It needs not to be said, that, in the final experiment, this absurd rule was found not to hold good. The king stuck fast about the chest and shoulders, and was extricated with some difficulty. Had it even been otherwise, the attempt would have failed; for, on looking down from amidst the iron bars, the king beheld, in the imperfect light, a number of people who were not amongst his accomplices.

Equal in fatuity, almost one hundred and fifty years later, were the several attempts at escape concerted on behalf of the French royal family. The abortive escape to Varennes is now familiarly known to all the world, and impeaches the good sense of the king himself not less than of his friends. The arrangements for the falling in with the cavalry escort could not have been worse managed had they been intrusted to children. But even the general outline of the scheme, an escape in a collective family party—father, mother, children, and servants—and the king himself, whose features, by means of the coinage, were known to millions, not even withdrawing himself from the public gaze at the stations for changing horses—all this is calculated to perplex and sadden the pitying reader with the idea that some supernatural infatuation had bewildered the predestined victims. Meantime an earlier escape than this to Varennes had been planned, viz., to Brussels. The

preparations for this, which have been narrated by Madame de Campan, were conducted with a disregard of concealment even more astounding to people of ordinary good sense. "Do you really need to escape at all?" would have been the question of many a lunatic; "If you do, surely you need also to disguise your preparations for escape."

But alike the madness or the providential wisdom of such attempts commands our profoundest interest; alike—whether conducted by a Cæsar, or by the helpless members of families utterly unfitted to act independently for themselves. These attempts belong to history, and it is in that relation that they become philosophically so impressive. Generations through an infinite series are contemplated by us as silently awaiting the turning of a sentinel round a corner, or the casual echo of a footstep. Dynasties have trepidated on the chances of a sudden cry from an infant carried in a basket; and the safety of empires has been suspended, like the descent of an avalanche, upon the moment earlier or the moment later of a cough or a sneeze. And, high above all, ascends solemnly the philosophic truth, that the least things and the greatest are bound together as elements equally essential of the mysterious universe.

ON THE KNOCKING AT THE GATE

IN MACBETH.

FROM my boyish days I had always felt a great perplexity on one point in Macbeth. It was this: the knocking at the gate, which succeeds to the murder of Duncan, produced to my feelings an effect for which I never could account. The effect was, that it reflected back upon the murderer a peculiar awfulness and a depth of solemnity; yet, however obstinately I endeavoured with my understanding to comprehend this, for many years I never could see *why* it should produce such an effect.

Here I pause for one moment, to exhort the reader never to pay any attention to his understanding, when it stands in opposition to any other faculty of his mind. The mere understanding, however useful and indispensable, is the meanest faculty in the human mind, and the most to be distrusted; and yet the great majority of people trust to nothing else, which may do for ordinary life, but not for philosophical purposes. Of this out of ten thousand instances that I might produce, I will cite one. Ask of any person whatsoever, who is not previously prepared for the demand by a knowledge of the perspective, to draw in the rudest way the commonest appearance which depends

upon the laws of that science; as, for instance, to represent the effect of two walls standing at right angles to each other, or the appearance of the houses on each side of a street, as seen by a person looking down the street from one extremity. Now in all cases, unless the person has happened to observe in pictures how it is that artists produce these effects, he will be utterly unable to make the smallest approximation to it. Yet why? For he has actually seen the effect every day of his life. The reason is—that he allows his understanding to overrule his eyes. His understanding, which includes no intuitive knowledge of the laws of vision, can furnish him with no reason why a line which is known and can be proved to be a horizontal line, should not *appear* a horizontal line; a line that made any angle with the perpendicular, less than a right angle, would seem to him to indicate that his houses were all tumbling down together. Accordingly, he makes the line of his houses a horizontal line, and fails, of course, to produce the effect demanded. Here, then, is one instance out of many, in which not only the understanding is allowed to overrule the eyes, but where the understanding is positively allowed to obliterate the eyes, as it were; for not only does the man believe the evidence of his understanding in opposition to that of his eyes, but (what is monstrous!) the idiot is not aware that his eyes ever gave such evidence. He does not know that he has seen (and therefore *quoad* his consciousness has *not* seen) that which he *has* seen every day of his life.

But to return from this digression, my understanding could furnish no reason why the knocking at the gate in Macbeth should produce any effect, direct or reflected. In fact, my understanding said positively that it could *not* produce any effect. But I knew better; I felt that it

did; and I waited and clung to the problem until further knowledge should enable me to solve it. At length, in 1812, Mr. Williams made his *début* on the stage of Ratcliffe Highway, and executed those unparalleled murders which have procured for him such a brilliant and undying reputation. On which murders, by the way, I must observe, that in one respect they have had an ill effect, by making the connoisseur in murder very fastidious in his taste, and dissatisfied by anything that has been since done in that line. All other murders look pale by the deep crimson of his; and, as an amateur once said to me in a querulous tone, "There has been absolutely nothing *doing* since his time, or nothing that's worth speaking of." But this is wrong; for it is unreasonable to expect all men to be great artists, and born with the genius of Mr. Williams. Now it will be remembered, that in the first of these murders (that of the Marrs), the same incident (of a knocking at the door, soon after the work of extermination was complete) did actually occur, which the genius of Shakspere has invented; and all good judges, and the most eminent dilettanti, acknowledged the felicity of Shakspere's suggestion, as soon as it was actually realized. Here, then, was a fresh proof that I was right in relying on my own feeling, in opposition to my understanding; and I again set myself to study the problem; at length I solved it to my own satisfaction, and my solution is this. Murder, in ordinary cases, where the sympathy is wholly directed to the case of the murdered person, is an incident of coarse and vulgar horror; and for this reason, that it flirgs the interest exclusively upon the natural but ignoble instinct by which we cleave to life; an instinct which, as being indispensable to the primal law of self-preservation, is the same in kind (though different in degree) amongst all

living creatures: this instinct, therefore, because it annihilates all distinctions, and degrades the greatest of men to the level of "the poor beetle that we tread on," exhibits human nature in its most abject and humiliating attitude. Such an attitude would little suit the purposes of the poet. What then must he do? He must throw the interest on the murderer. Our sympathy must be with *him* (of course I mean a sympathy of comprehension, a sympathy by which we enter into his feelings, and are made to understand them,—not a sympathy of pity or approbation*). In the murdered person, all strife of thought, all flux and reflux of passion and of purpose, are crushed by one overwhelming panic; the fear of instant death smites him "with its petrific mace." But in the murderer, such a murderer as a poet will condescend to, there must be raging some great storm of passion—jealousy, ambition, vengeance, hatred—which will create a hell within him; and into this hell we are to look.

In Macbeth, for the sake of gratifying his own enormous and teeming faculty of creation, Shakspere has introduced two murderers: and, as usual in his hands, they are remarkably discriminated: but, though in Macbeth the strife of mind is greater than in his wife, the tiger spirit not so awake, and his feelings caught chiefly by contagion from her,—yet, as both were finally involved in the guilt of

* It seems almost ludicrous to guard and explain my use of a word, in a situation where it would naturally explain itself. But it has become necessary to do so, in consequence of the unscholarlike use of the word sympathy, at present so general, by which, instead of taking it in its proper sense, as the act of reproducing in our minds the feelings of another, whether for hatred, indignation, love, pity, or approbation, it is made a mere synonyme of the word *pity*, and hence, instead of saying "sympathy *with* another," many writers adopt the monstrous barbarism of "sympathy *for* another."

murder, the murderous mind of necessity is finally to be presumed in both. This was to be expressed; and on its own account, as well as to make it a more proportionable antagonist to the unoffending nature of their victim, "the gracious Duncan," and adequately to expound "the deep damnation of his taking off," this was to be expressed with peculiar energy. We were to be made to feel that the human nature, *i.e.*, the divine nature of love and mercy, spread through the hearts of all creatures, and seldom utterly withdrawn from man—was gone, vanished, extinct; and that the fiendish nature had taken its place. And, as this effect is marvellously accomplished in the *dialogues* and *soliloquies* themselves, so it is finally consummated by the expedient under consideration; and it is to this that I now solicit the reader's attention. If the reader has ever witnessed a wife, daughter, or sister in a fainting fit, he may chance to have observed that the most affecting moment in such a spectacle is *that* in which a sigh and a stirring announce the recommencement of suspended life. Or, if the reader has ever been present in a vast metropolis, on the day when some great national idol was carried in funeral pomp to his grave, and chancing to walk near the course through which it passed, has felt powerfully in the silence and desertion of the streets, and in the stagnation of ordinary business, the deep interest which at that moment was possessing the heart of man—if all at once he should hear the death-like stillness broken up by the sound of wheels rattling away from the scene, and making known that the transitory vision was dissolved, he will be aware that at no moment was his sense of the complete suspension and pause in ordinary human concerns so full and affecting, as at that moment when the suspension ceases, and the goings-on of human life are suddenly resumed. All action

in any direction is best expounded, measured, and made apprehensible, by reaction. Now apply this to the case in Macbeth. Here, as I have said, the retiring of the human heart, and the entrance of the fiendish heart was to be expressed and made sensible. Another world has stept in; and the murderers are taken out of the region of human things, human purposes, human desires. They are transfigured: Lady Macbeth is "unsexed;" Macbeth has forgot that he was born of woman; both are conformed to the image of devils; and the world of devils is suddenly revealed. But how shall this be conveyed and made palpable? In order that a new world may step in, this world must for a time disappear. The murderers, and the murder must be insulated—cut off by an immeasurable gulf from the ordinary tide and succession of human affairs—locked up and sequestered in some deep recess; we must be made sensible that the world of ordinary life is suddenly arrested—laid asleep—tranced—racked into a dread armistice; time must be annihilated; relation to things without abolished; and all must pass self-withdrawn into a deep syncope and suspension of earthly passion. Hence it is, that when the deed is done, when the work of darkness is perfect, then the world of darkness passes away like a pageantry in the clouds: the knocking at the gate is heard; and it makes known audibly that the reaction has commenced; the human has made its reflux upon the fiendish; the pulses of life are beginning to beat again; and the re-establishment of the goings-on of the world in which we live, first makes us profoundly sensible of the awful parenthesis that had suspended them.

O mighty poet! Thy works are not as those of other men, simply and merely great works of art; but are also like the phenomena of nature, like the sun and the sea, the

stars and the flowers; like frost and snow, rain and dew, hail-storm and thunder, which are to be studied with entire submission of our own faculties, and in the perfect faith that in them there can be no too much or too little, nothing useless or inert—but that, the farther we press in our discoveries, the more we shall see proofs of design and self-supporting arrangement where the careless eye had seen nothing but accident!

THE ANTIGONE OF SOPHOCLES

AS REPRESENTED ON THE EDINBURGH STAGE.

EVERYTHING in our days is new. *Roads*, for instance, which, being formerly "of the earth, earthy," and therefore perishable, are now iron, and next door to being immortal; *tragedies*, which are so entirely new, that neither we nor our fathers, through eighteen hundred and ninety odd years, gone by, since Cæsar did our little island the honour to sit upon its skirts, have ever seen the like to this "Antigone;" and, finally, even more new are *readers*, who, being once an obedient race of men, most humble and deferential in the presence of a Greek scholar, are now become intractably mutinous; keep their hats on whilst he is addressing them; and listen to him or not, as he seems to talk sense or nonsense. Some there are, however, who look upon all these new things as being intensely old. Yet, surely the railroads are new? No; not at all. Talus, the iron man in Spenser, who continually ran round the island of Crete, administering gentle warning and correction to offenders, by flooring them with an iron flail, was a very ancient personage in Greek fable; and the received opinion is, that he must have been a Cretan railroad, called The Great Circular Coast-Line, that carried my lords the judges on

their circuits of jail-delivery. The "Antigone," again, that wears the freshness of morning dew, and is so fresh and dewy in the beautiful person of Miss Faucit, had really begun to look faded on the Athenian stage, and even "of a certain age," about the death of Pericles, whose meridian year was the year 444 before Christ. Lastly, these modern *readers*, that are so obstinately rebellious to the once Papal authority of Greek, they—No; on consideration, they *are* new. Antiquity produced many monsters, but none like *them*.

The truth is, that this vast multiplication of readers, within the last twenty-five years, has changed the prevailing character of readers. The minority has become the overwhelming majority: the quantity has disturbed the quality. Formerly, out of every five readers, at least four were, in some degree, classical scholars: or, if *that* would be saying too much, if two of the four had "small Latin and less Greek," they were generally connected with those who had more, or at the worst, who had much reverence for Latin, and more reverence for Greek. If they did not all share in the services of the temple, all at least shared in the superstition. But, now-a-days, the readers come chiefly from a class of busy people who care very little for ancestral crazes. Latin they have heard of, and some of them know it as a good sort of industrious language, that even, in modern times, has turned out many useful books, astronomical, medical, philosophical, and (as Mrs. Malaprop observes) diabolical; but, as to Greek, they think of it as of an ancient mummy: you spend an infinity of time in unswathing it from its old dusty wrappers, and when you have come to the end, what do you find for your pains? A woman's face, or a baby's, that certainly is not the better for being 3000 years old; and perhaps a few ears of wheat,

stolen from Pharaoh's granary; which wheat, when sown* in Norfolk or Mid-Lothian, reaped, thrashed, ground, baked, and hunted through all sorts of tortures, yields a breakfast roll that (as a Scottish baker observed to me) is "not just *that* bad." Certainly not: not exactly "*that* bad;" not worse than the worst of our own; but still, much fitter for Pharaoh's breakfast-table than for ours.

I, for my own part, stand upon an isthmus, connecting me, at one terminus, with the rebels against Greek, and, at the other, with those against whom they are in rebellion; on the one hand, it seems shocking to me, who am steeped to the lips in antique prejudices, that Greek, in unlimited quantities, should not secure a limited privilege of talking nonsense. Is all reverence extinct for old and ivy-mantled and worm-eaten things? Surely, if your own grandmother lectures on morals, which perhaps now and then she does, she will command that reverence from you, by means of her grandmotherhood, which by means of her ethics she might *not*. To be a good Grecian, is now to be a faded potentate; a sort of phantom Mogul, sitting at Delhi, with an English sepoy bestriding his shoulders. Matched against the master of *ologies*, in our days the most accomplished of Grecians is becoming what the "master of sentences" had become long since, in competition with the political economist. Yet, be assured, reader, that all the "ologies" hitherto christened oölogy, ichthyology, ornithology, conchology, palæodontology, &c., do not furnish such mines of labour as does the Greek language when thoroughly searched. The "Mithridates" of Adelung, improved by the commentaries of Vater and of subsequent authors, numbers up about 4000 languages and jargons on our polyglot earth;

* "*When sown;*" as it has been repeatedly; a fact which some readers may not be aware of.

not including the chuckling of poultry, nor caterwauling, nor barking, howling, braying, lowing, nor other respectable and ancient dialects, that perhaps have their elegant and their vulgar varieties, as well as prouder forms of communication. But my impression is, that the Greek, taken by itself, this one exquisite language, considered as a quarry of *intellectual* labour, has more work in it, is more truly a *pièce de resistance*, than all the remaining 3999, with caterwauling thrown into the bargain. So far I side with the Grecian, and think that he ought to be honoured with a little genuflexion. Yet, on the other hand, the finest sound on this earth, and which rises like an orchestra, above all the uproars of earth and the Babels of earthly languages, is truth—absolute truth; and the hatefulest is conscious falsehood. Now, there *is* falsehood, nay (which seems strange), even sycophancy, in the old undistinguishing homage to all that is called classical. Yet why should men be sycophants in cases where they *must* be disinterested? Sycophancy grows out of fear, or out of mercenary self-interest. But what can there exist of either pointing to an old Greek poet? Cannot a man give his free opinion upon Homer, without fearing to be waylaid by his ghost? But it is not *that* which startles him from publishing the secret demur which his heart prompts, upon hearing false praises of a Greek poet, or praises which, if not false, are extravagant. What he fears, is the scorn of his contemporaries. Let once a party have formed itself, considerable enough to protect a man from the charge of presumption in throwing off the yoke of *servile* allegiance to all that is called classical,—let it be a party ever so small numerically, and the rebels will soon be many. What a man fears is, to affront the whole storm of indignation, real and affected, in his own

solitary person. "Goth!" "Vandal!" he hears from every side. Break that storm by dividing it, and he will face its anger. "Let me be a Goth," he mutters to himself, "but let me not dishonour myself by affecting an enthusiasm which my heart rejects!"

Ever since the restoration of letters there has been a cabal, an academic interest, a factious league amongst universities, and learned bodies, and individual scholars, for exalting as something superterrestrial, and quite unapproachable by moderns, the monuments of Greek literature. France, in the time of Louis XIV., England, in the latter part of that time; in fact, each country as it grew polished at some cost of strength, carried this craze to a dangerous excess—dangerous as all things false are dangerous, and depressing to the aspirations of genius. Boileau, for instance, and Addison, though neither of them accomplished in scholarship,* nor either of them extensively read in *any* department of the classic literature, speak everywhere of the classics as having notoriously, and by the general confession of polished nations, carried the functions of poetry and eloquence to that sort of faultless beauty which probably does *really* exist in the Greek sculpture. There are few things perfect in this world of frailty. Even lightning is sometimes a failure: Niagara has horrible faults; and Mont Blanc might be improved by a century of chiselling from judicious artists. Such are the works of blind elements, which (poor things!) cannot improve by experience. As to man who *does*, the sculpture of the Greeks in their marbles and sometimes in their gems, seems the only act of

* Boileau, it is true, translated Longinus. But there goes little Greek to *that*. It is in dealing with Attic Greek, and Attic *poets*, that a man can manifest his Grecian skill.

his workmanship which has hit the bull's eye in the target at which we are all aiming. Not so, with permission from Messrs. Boileau and Addison, the Greek literature. The faults in this are often conspicuous; nor are they likely to be hidden for the coming century, as they have been for the three last. The idolatry will be shaken: as *idols*, some of the classic models are destined to totter; and I foresee, without gifts of prophecy, that many labourers will soon be in this field—many idoloclasts, who will expose the signs of disease, which zealots had interpreted as power; and of weakness, which is not the less real because scholars had fancied it health, nor the less injurious to the total effect because it was inevitable under the accidents of the Grecian position.

Meantime, I repeat, that to disparage anything whatever, or to turn the eye upon blemishes, is no part of my present purpose. Nor could it be: since the one sole section of the Greek literature, as to which I profess myself an enthusiast, happens to be the tragic drama; and here, only, I myself am liable to be challenged as an idolater. As regards the Antigone in particular, so profoundly do I feel the impassioned beauty of her situation in connexion with her character, that long ago, in a work of my own (yet unpublished), having occasion (by way of overture introducing one of the sections) to cite before the reader's eye the chief pomps of the Grecian theatre, after invoking "the magnificent witch" Medea, I call up Antigone to this shadowy stage by the apostrophe, "Holy heathen, daughter of God, before God was known,* flower from Paradise after Paradise was closed; that quitting all things for which flesh languishes, safety and honour, a palace and a home, didst

* "*Before God was known;*"—*i.e.*, known in Greece.

make thyself a houseless pariah, lest the poor pariah king, thy outcast father, should want a hand to lead him in his darkness, or a voice to whisper comfort in his misery; angel, that badst depart for ever the glories of thy own bridal day, lest he that had shared thy nursery in childhood should want the honours of a funeral; idolatrous, yet Christian Lady, that in the spirit of martyrdom trodst alone the yawning billows of the grave, flying from earthly hopes, lest everlasting despair should settle upon the grave of thy brother," &c. In fact, though all the groupings, and what I would call permanent attitudes of the Grecian stage, are majestic, there is none that, to my mind, towers into such affecting grandeur as this final revelation, through Antigone herself, and through her own dreadful death, of the tremendous wo that destiny had suspended over her house. If therefore my business had been chiefly with the individual drama, I should have found little room for any sentiment but that of profound admiration. But my present business is different: it concerns the Greek drama generally, and the attempt to revive it; and its object is to elucidate, rather than to praise or to blame. To explain this better, I will describe two things:—1*st*, The sort of audience that I suppose myself to be addressing; and, 2*dly*, As growing out of *that*, the particular quality of the explanations which I wish to make.

1*st*, As to the audience: In order to excuse the tone (which occasionally I may be obliged to assume) of one speaking as from a station of knowledge, to others having no knowledge, I beg it to be understood, that I take that station deliberately, on no conceit of superiority to my readers, but as a companion adapting my services to the wants of those who need them. I am not addressing those already familiar with the Greek drama, but those who

frankly confess, and (according to their conjectural appreciation of it) who regret their non-familiarity with that drama. It is a thing well known to publishers, through remarkable results, and is now showing itself on a scale continually widening, that a new literary public has arisen, very different from any which existed at the beginning of this century. The aristocracy of the land have always been, in a moderate degree, literary; less, however, in connexion with the *current* literature, than with literature generally—past as well as present. And this is a tendency naturally favoured and strengthened in *them*, by the fine collections of books, carried forward through successive generations, which are so often found as a sort of hereditary foundation in the country mansions of our nobility. But a class of readers, prodigiously more extensive, has formed itself within the commercial orders of our great cities and manufacturing districts. These orders range through a large scale. The highest classes amongst them were always literary. But the interest of literature has now swept downwards through a vast compass of descents: and this large body, though the busiest in the nation, yet, by having under their undisturbed command such leisure time as they have *at all* under their command, are eventually able to read more than those even who seem to have nothing else but leisure. In justice, however, to the nobility of our land, it should be remembered, that their stations in society, and their wealth, their territorial duties, and their various public duties in London, as at court, at public meetings, in Parliament, &c., bring crowded claims upon their time; whilst even sacrifices of time to the graceful courtesies of life are, in reference to *their* stations, a sort of secondary duties. These allowances made, it still remains true that the busier classes are the main reading classes;

whilst from their immense numbers, they are becoming effectually the body that will more and more impress upon the moving literature its main impulse and direction. One other feature of difference there is amongst this commercial class of readers: amongst the aristocracy all are thoroughly educated, excepting those who go at an early age into the army; of the commercial body, none receive an elaborate, and what is meant by a liberal education, except those standing by their connexions in the richest classes. Thus it happens that, amongst those who have not inherited but achieved their stations, many men of fine and powerful understandings, accomplished in manners, and admirably informed, not having had the benefits when young of a regular classical education, find (upon any accident bringing up such subjects) a deficiency which they do not find on other subjects. They are too honourable to undervalue advantages, which they feel to be considerable, simply because they were denied to themselves. They regret their loss. And yet it seems hardly worth while, on a simple prospect of contingencies that may never be realized, to undertake an entirely new course of study for redressing this loss. But they would be glad to avail themselves of any useful information not exacting study. These are the persons, this is the class, to which I address my remarks on the "Antigone;" and out of *their* particular situation, suggesting upon all elevated subjects a corresponding tone of liberal curiosity, will arise the particular nature and direction of these remarks.

Accordingly, I presume, *secondly*, that this curiosity will take the following course: These persons will naturally wish to know, at starting, what there is *differentially* interesting in a Grecian tragedy, as contrasted with one of Shakspere's or of Schiller's: in what respect, and by what

agencies, a Greek tragedy affects us, or is meant to affect us, otherwise than as *they* do; and how far the Antigone of Sophocles was judiciously chosen as the particular medium for conveying to British minds a first impression, and a representative impression, of Greek tragedy. So far, in relation to the ends proposed, and the means selected. *Finally*, these persons will be curious to know the issue of such an experiment. Let the purposes and the means have been bad or good, what was the actual success? And not merely success, in the sense of the momentary acceptance by half a dozen audiences, whom the mere decencies of justice must have compelled to acknowledge the manager's trouble and expense on their behalf; but what was the degree of satisfaction felt by students of the Athenian* tragedy, in relation to their long-cherished ideal? Did the representation succeed in realizing, for a moment, the awful pageant of the Athenian stage? Did Tragedy, in Milton's immortal expression,—

> "Come sweeping by
> In sceptred pall?"

Or was the whole, though successful in relation to the thing attempted, a failure in relation to what ought to have been attempted? Such are the questions to be answered.

The first elementary idea of a Greek tragedy, is to be

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* At times, I say pointedly, the *Athenian* rather than the *Grecian* tragedy, in order to keep the reader's attention awake to a remark made by Paterculus,—viz., That although Greece coquettishly welcomed homage to herself, as generally concerned in the Greek literature, in reality Athens only had any original share in the drama, or in the oratory of Greece.

sought in a serious Italian opera. The Greek dialogue is represented by the recitative, and the tumultuous lyrical parts assigned chiefly, though not exclusively, to the chorus on the Greek stage, are represented by the impassioned airs, duos, trios, choruses, &c., on the Italian. And here, at the very outset, occurs a question which lies at the threshold of a Fine Art,—that is, of *any* Fine Art: for had the views of Addison upon the Italian opera had the least foundation in truth, there could have been no room or opening for any mode of imitation except such as belongs to a *mechanic* art.

The reason for at all connecting Addison with this case is, that *he* chiefly was the person occupied in assailing the Italian opera; and this hostility arose, probably, in his want of sensibility to good (that is, to Italian) music. But whatever might be his motive for the hostility, the single argument by which he supported it was this,—that a hero ought not to sing upon the stage, because no hero known to history ever summoned a garrison in a song, or charged a battery in a semichorus. In this argument lies an ignorance of the very first principle concerned in *every* Fine Art. In all alike, more or less directly, the object is to reproduce in the mind some great effect, through the agency of *idem in alio*. The *idem*, the same impression, is to be restored; but *in alio*, in a different material,—by means of some different instrument. For instance, on the Roman stage there was an art, now entirely lost, of narrating, and in part of dramatically representing an impassioned tale, by means of dancing, of musical accompaniment in the orchestra, and of elaborate pantomime in the performer. *Saltavit Hypermnestram*, he danced (that is, he represented by dancing and pantomime the story of) Hypermnestra. Now, suppose a man to object, that young ladies, when

saving their youthful husbands at midnight from assassination, could not be capable of waltzing or quadrilling, how wide is this of the whole problem! This is still seeking for the *mechanic* imitation, some imitation founded in the very fact; whereas the object is to seek the imitation in the sameness of the impression drawn from a different, or even from an impossible fact. If a man, taking a hint from the Roman "Saltatio" (*saltavit Andromachen*), should say that he would "whistle Waterloo," that is, by whistling connected with pantomime, would express the passion and the charges of Waterloo, it would be monstrous to refuse him his postulate on the pretence that "people did not whistle at Waterloo." Precisely so: neither are most people made of marble, but of a material as different as can well be imagined, viz., of elastic flesh, with warm blood coursing along its tubes; and yet, for all *that*, a sculptor will draw tears from you, by exhibiting, in pure statuary marble, on a sepulchral monument, two young children with their little heads on a pillow, sleeping in each other's arms; whereas, if he had presented them in wax-work, which yet is far more like to flesh, you would have felt little more pathos in the scene than if they had been shown baked in gilt gingerbread. He has expressed the *idem*, the identical thing expressed in the real children; the sleep that masks death, the rest, the peace, the purity, the innocence; but *in alio*, in a substance the most different; rigid, non-elastic, and as unlike to flesh, if tried by touch, or eye, or by experience of life, as can well be imagined. So of the whistling. It is the very worst objection in the world to say, that the strife of Waterloo did not reveal itself through whistling: undoubtedly it did not; but that is the very ground of the man's art. He will reproduce the fury and the movement as to the only point which concerns you, viz., the effect.

upon your own sympathies, through a language that seems without any relation to it: he will set before you what *was* at Waterloo through that which was *not* at Waterloo. Whereas any direct factual imitation, resting upon painted figures drest up in regimentals, and worked by watchwork through the whole movements of the battle, would have been no art whatsoever in the sense of a Fine Art, but a base *mechanic* mimicry.

This principle of the *idem in alio*, so widely diffused through all the higher revelations of art, it is peculiarly requisite to bear in mind when looking at Grecian tragedy, because no form of human composition employs it in so much complexity. How confounding it would have been to Addison, if somebody had told him, that, substantially, he had himself committed the offence (as he fancied it) which he charged so bitterly upon the Italian opera; and that, if the opera had gone farther upon that road than himself, the Greek tragedy, which he presumed to be so prodigiously exalted beyond modern approaches, had gone farther even than the opera. Addison himself, when writing a tragedy, made this violation (as he would have said) of nature, made this concession (as *I* should say) to a higher nature, that he compelled his characters to talk in metre. It is true this metre was the common iambic, which (as Aristotle remarks) is the most natural and spontaneous of all metres; and, for a sufficient reason, in all languages. Certainly; but Aristotle never meant to say that it was natural for a gentleman in a passion to talk threescore and ten iambics *consecutively:* a chance line might escape him once and away; as we know that Tacitus opened one of his works by a regular dactylic hexameter in full curl, without ever discovering it to his dying day (a fact which is clear from his never having corrected it); and this being

a very artificial metre, *à fortiori* Tacitus might have slipped into a simple iambic. But that was an accident, whilst Addison had deliberately and uniformly made his characters talk in verse. According to the common and false meaning [which was his own meaning] of the word Nature, he had as undeniably violated the principle of the *natural*, by this metrical dialogue, as the Italian opera by musical dialogue. If it is hard and trying for men to sing their emotions, not less so it must be to deliver them in verse.

But, if this were shocking, how much more shocking would it have seemed to Addison, had he been introduced to parts which really exist in the Grecian drama? Even Sophocles, who, of the three tragic poets surviving from the wrecks of the Athenian stage, is reputed the supreme *artist*,* if not the most impassioned poet, with what horror he would have overwhelmed Addison, when read by the light of those principles which he had himself so scornfully applied to the opera! In the very monsoon of his raving misery, from calamities as sudden as they were irredeemable, a king is

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* "*The supreme artist*:"—It is chiefly by comparison with Euripides, that Sophocles is usually crowned with the laurels of *art*. But there is some danger of doing wrong to the truth in too blindly adhering to these old rulings of critical courts. The judgments would sometimes be reversed, if the pleadings were before us. There were blockheads in those days. Undoubtedly it is past denying that Euripides at times betrays marks of carelessness in the structure of his plots, as if writing too much in a hurry: the original cast of the fable is sometimes not happy, and the evolution or disentangling is too precipitate. It is easy to see that he would have remoulded them in a revised edition, or *diaskeue* [διασκευη]. On the other hand, I remember nothing in the Greek drama more worthy of a great artist than parts in his Phœnissæ. Neither is he the effeminately tender, or merely pathetic poet that some people imagine. He was able to sweep *all* the chords of the impassioned spirit. But the whole of this subject is in arrear: it is in fact *res integra*, almost unbroken ground.

introduced, not only conversing, but conversing in metre; not only in metre, but in the most elaborate of choral metres; not only under the torture of these lyric difficulties, but also chanting; not only chanting, but also in all probability dancing. What do you think of *that*, Mr. Addison?

There is, in fact, a scale of graduated ascents in these artifices for unrealizing the effects of dramatic situations:

1. We may see, even in novels and prose comedies, a keen attention paid to the inspiriting and *dressing* of the dialogue: it is meant to be life-like, but still it is a little raised, pointed, coloured, and idealized.

2. In comedy of a higher and more poetic cast, we find the dialogue *metrical.*

3. In comedy or in tragedy alike, which is meant to be still further removed from ordinary life, we find the dialogue fettered not only by metre, but by *rhyme.* We need not go to Dryden, and others, of our own middle stage, or to the French stage for this: even in Shakspere, as for example, in parts of Romeo and Juliet (and for no capricious purpose), we may see effects sought from the use of rhyme. There is another illustration of the idealizing effect to be obtained from a particular treatment of the dialogue, seen in the Hamlet of Shakspere. In that drama there arises a necessity for exhibiting a play within a play. This interior drama is to be further removed from the spectator than the principal drama; it is a deep below a deep; and, to produce that effect, the poet relies chiefly upon the stiffening the dialogue, and removing it still farther, than the general dialogue of the *including* or *outside* drama, from the standard of ordinary life.

4. We may suppose, superadded to these artifices for idealizing the situations, even music of an intermitting

character, sometimes less, sometimes more impassioned—recitatives, airs, choruses. Here we have reached the Italian opera.

5. And, *finally*, besides all these resources of art, we find dancing introduced; but dancing of a solemn, mystical, and symbolic character. Here, at last, we have reached the Greek tragedy. Probably the best exemplification of a Grecian tragedy that ever *will* be given to a modern reader is found in the Samson Agonistes of Milton. Now, in the choral or lyric parts of this fine drama, Samson not only talks, 1*st*, metrically (as he does everywhere, and in the most level parts of the scenic business), but, 2*d*, in very intricate metres, and, 3*d*, occasionally in *rhymed* metres (though the rhymes are perhaps too sparingly and too capriciously scattered by Milton), and, 4*th*, *singing* or chanting these metres (for, as the chorus sang, it was impossible that *he* could be allowed to talk in his ordinary voice, else he would have put them out, and ruined the music). Finally, 5*th*, I am satisfied that Milton meant him to *dance*. The office of the *chorus* was imperfectly defined upon the Greek stage. They are generally understood to be the *moralizers* of the scene. But this is liable to exceptions. Some of them have been known to do very bad things on the stage, and to come within a trifle of felony: as to misprision of felony, if there *is* such a crime, a Greek chorus thinks nothing of it. But that is no business of mine. What I was going to say is, that, as the chorus sometimes intermingles too much in the action, so the actors sometimes intermingle in the business of the chorus. Now, when you are at Rome, you must do as they do at Rome. And that the actor, who mixed with the chorus, was compelled to sing, is a clear case; for *his* part in the choral ode is always in the nature of an echo, or answer, or like an *antiphony*

in cathedral services. But nothing could be more absurd than that one of these antiphonies should be sung, and another said. That he was also compelled to dance, I am satisfied. The chorus only *sometimes* moralized, but it *always* danced: and any actor, mingling with the chorus, must dance also. A little incident occurs to my remembrance, from the Moscow expedition of 1812, which may here be used as an illustration: One day King Murat, flourishing his plumage as usual, made a gesture of invitation to some squadrons of cavalry that they should charge the enemy: upon which the cavalry advanced, but maliciously contrived to envelop the king of dandies, before he had time to execute his ordinary manœuvre of riding off to the left and becoming a spectator of their prowess. The cavalry resolved that for this once his Majesty should ride down at their head to the *melée*, and taste what fighting was like; and he, finding that the thing must be, though horribly vexed, made a merit of his necessity, and afterwards pretended that he liked it very much. Sometimes, in the darkness, in default of other misanthropic visions, the wickedness of this cavalry, their *méchanceté*, causes me to laugh immoderately. Now, I conceive that any interloper into the Greek chorus must have danced when *they* danced, or he would have been swept away by their impetus: *nolens volens*, he must have rode along with the orchestral charge, he must have rode on the crest of the choral billows, or he would have been rode down by their impassioned sweep. Samson, and Œdipus, and others, must have danced, if they sang; and they certainly *did* sing, by notoriously intermingling in the choral business.*

* I see a possible screw loose at this point: if *you* see it, reader, have the goodness to hold your tongue.

"But now," says the plain English reader, "what was the object of all these elaborate devices? And how came it that the English tragedy, which surely is as good as the Greek" (and at this point a devil of defiance whispers to him, like the quarrelsome servant of the Capulets or the Montagues, "say *better*"), "that the English tragedy contented itself with fewer of these artful resources than the Athenian?" I reply, that the object of all these things was—to unrealize the scene. The English drama, by its metrical dress, and by other arts more disguised, unrealized itself, liberated itself from the oppression of life in its ordinary standards, up to a certain height. Why it did not rise still higher, and why the Grecian *did*, I will endeavour to explain. It was not that the English tragedy was less impassioned; on the contrary, it was far more so; the Greek being awful rather than impassioned; but the passion of each is in a different key. It is not again that the Greek drama sought a lower object than the English: it sought a different object. It is not imparity, but disparity, that divides the two magnificent theatres.

Suffer me, reader, at this point, to borrow from myself and do not betray me to the authorities that rule in this journal, if you happen to know (which is not likely) that I am taking an idea from a paper which years ago I wrote for an eminent literary journal. As I have no copy of that paper before me, it is impossible that I should save myself any labour of writing. The words, at any rate, I must invent afresh: and, as to the idea, you never *can* be such a churlish man as, by insisting on a new one, in effect to insist upon my writing a false one. In the following paragraph, therefore, I give the substance of a thought suggested by myself some years ago.

That kind of feeling, which broods over the Grecian

tragedy, and to court which feeling the tragic poets of Greece naturally spread all their canvas, was more nearly allied to the atmosphere of death than that of life. This expresses rudely the character of awe and religious horror investing the Greek theatre. But to my own feeling the different principle of passion which governs the Grecian conception of tragedy, as compared with the English, is best conveyed by saying that the Grecian is a breathing from the world of sculpture, the English a breathing from the world of painting. What we read in sculpture is not absolutely death, but still less is it the fulness of life. We read there the abstraction of a life that reposes, the sublimity of a life that aspires, the solemnity of a life that is thrown to an infinite distance. This last is the feature of sculpture which seems most characteristic; the form which presides in the most commanding groups "is not dead but sleepeth:" true, but it is the sleep of a life sequestrated, solemn, liberated from the bonds of space and time, and (as to both alike) thrown (I repeat the words) to a distance which is infinite. It affects us profoundly, but not by agitation. Now, on the other hand, the breathing life—life kindling, trembling, palpitating—that life which speaks to us in painting, this is also the life that speaks to us in English tragedy. Into an English tragedy even festivals of joy may enter; marriages and baptisms, or commemorations of national trophies; which, or anything *like* which, is incompatible with the very being of the Greek. In what tragedy what uniformity of gloom; in the English what light alternating with depths of darkness! The Greek, how mournful; the English, how tumultuous! Even the catastrophes how different! In the Greek we see a breathless waiting for a doom that cannot be evaded; a waiting, as it were, for the last shock of an earthquake, or the in-

exorable rising of a deluge: in the English it is like a midnight of shipwreck, from which up to the last and till the final ruin comes, there still survives the sort of hope that clings to human energies.

Connected with this original awfulness of the Greek tragedy, and possibly in part its cause, or at least lending strength to its cause, we may next remark the grand dimensions of the ancient theatres. Every citizen had a right to accommodation. *There* at once was a pledge of grandeur. Out of this original standard grew the magnificence of many a future amphitheatre, circus, hippodrome. Had the original theatre been merely a speculation of private interest, then, exactly as demand arose, a corresponding supply would have provided for it through its ordinary vulgar channels; and this supply would have taken place through rival theatres. But the crushing exaction of "room for *every* citizen," put an end to that process of subdivision. Drury Lane, as I read (or think that I read) thirty years ago, allowed sitting room for three thousand eight hundred people. Multiply *that* by ten; imagine thirty-eight thousand instead of thirty-eight hundred, and then you have an idea of the Athenian theatre.*

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* "*Athenian Theatre:*"—Many corrections remain to be made. Athens, in her bloom, was about as big as Calcutta, which contained, forty years ago, more than half a million of people; or as Naples, which (being long rated at three hundred thousand), is now known to contain at least two hundred thousand more. The well-known census of Demetrius Phalereus gave twenty-one thousand citizens. Multiply this by 5, or $4\frac{3}{4}$, and you have their families. Add ten thousand, multiplied by $4\frac{1}{2}$, for the *Metoikoi*. Then add four hundred thousand for the slaves: total, about five hundred and fifty thousand. But upon the fluctuations of the Athenian population there is much room for speculation. And, *quære*, was not the population of Athens greater two centuries before Demetrius, in the days of Pericles?

Next, out of that grandeur in the architectural proportions arose, as by necessity, other grandeurs. You are aware of the *cothurnus*, or buskin, which raised the actor's heel by two and a half inches; and you think that this must have caused a deformity in the general figure as incommensurate to this height. Not at all. The flowing dress of Greece healed all *that*.

But, besides the *cothurnus*, you have heard of the mask. So far as it was fitted to swell the intonations of the voice, you are of opinion that this mask would be a happy contrivance; for what, you say, could a common human voice avail against the vast radiation from the actor's centre of more than three myriads? If, indeed (like the Homeric Stentor), an actor spoke in point of loudness, ὅσον ἄλλοι πεντηκοντα, as much as other fifty, then he might become audible to the assembled Athenians without aid. But this being impossible, art must be invoked; and well if the mask, together with contrivances of another class, could correct it. Yet if it could, still you think that this mask would bring along with it an overbalancing evil. For the expression, the fluctuating expression, of the features, the play of the muscles, the music of the eye and of the lips—aids to acting that, in our times, have given immortality to scores—whither would those have vanished? Reader, it mortifies me that all which I said to you upon the peculiar and separate grandeur investing the Greek theatre is forgotten. For, you must consider, that where a theatre is built for receiving upwards of thirty thousand spectators, the curve described by what in modern times you would call the tiers of boxes, must be so vast as to make the ordinary scale of human features almost ridiculous by disproportion. Seat yourself this day in the amphitheatre at Verona, and judge for yourself. In an amphitheatre, the

stage, or properly the arena, occupying, in fact, the place of our modern pit, was much nearer than in a scenic theatre to the surrounding spectators. Allow for this, and placing some adult in a station expressing the distance of the Athenian stage, then judge by his appearance if the delicate pencilling of Grecian features could have told of the Grecian distance. But even if it could, then I say that this circumstantiality would have been hostile to the general tendencies (as already indicated) of the Grecian drama. The sweeping movement of the Attic tragedy *ought* not to admit of interruption from *distinct* human features; the expression of an eye, the loveliness of a smile, *ought* to be lost amongst effects so colossal. The mask aggrandized the features: even so far it acted favourably. Then figure to yourself this mask presenting an idealized face of the noblest Grecian outline, moulded by some skilful artist *Phidiacâ manu*, so as to have the effect of a marble bust; this accorded with the aspiring *cothurnus;* and the motionless character impressed upon the features, the marble tranquillity, would (I contend) suit the solemn processional character of Athenian tragedy, far better than the most expressive and flexible countenance on its natural scale. "Yes," you say, on considering the character of the Greek drama, "generally it might; in forty-nine cases suppose out of fifty: but what shall be done in the fiftieth, where some dreadful discovery or *anagnorisis* (*i.e.*, recognition of identity) takes place within the compass of a single line or two; as, for instance, in the Œdipus Tyrannus, at the moment when Œdipus by a final question of his own, extorts his first fatal discovery, viz., that he had been himself unconsciously the murderer of Laius?" True, he has no reason as yet to suspect that Laius was his own father; which discovery, when made further on, will draw with it another still more dreadful,

viz., that by this parricide he had opened his road to a throne, and to a marriage with his father's widow, who was also his own natural mother. He does not yet know the worst: and to have killed an arrogant prince, would not in those days have seemed a very deep offence: but then he believes that the pestilence had been sent as a secret vengeance for this assassination, which is thus invested with a mysterious character of horror. Just at this point, Jocasta, his mother and his wife, says,* on witnessing the sudden revulsion of feeling in his face, "I shudder, O king, when looking on thy countenance." Now, in what way could this passing spasm of horror be reconciled with the unchanging expression in the marble-looking mask? This, and similar cases to this, must surely be felt to argue a defect in the scenic apparatus. But I say, no: *first*, Because the general indistinctness from distance is a benefit that applies equally to the fugitive changes of the features and to their permanent expression. You need not regret the loss through *absence*, of an appearance that would equally, though present, have been lost through *distance*. *Secondly*, The Greek actor had always the resource, under such difficulties, of averting his face; a resource sanctioned in similar cases by the greatest of the Greek painters. *Thirdly*, The voluminous draperies of the scenic dresses, and generally of the Greek costume, made it an easy thing to muffle the features altogether by a gesture most natural to sudden horror. *Fourthly*, We must consider that there were no stage lights; but, on the contrary, that the general light of day was specially mitigated for that particular part of the theatre; just as various architectural devices

* Having no Sophocles at hand, I quote from memory, not pretending therefore to exactness: but the sense is what I state.

were employed to swell the volume of sound. *Finally*, I repeat my sincere opinion, that the general indistinctness of the expression was, on principles of taste, an advantage, as harmonizing with the stately and sullen monotony of the Greek tragedy. Grandeur in the attitudes, in the gestures, in the groups, in the processions—all this was indispensable: but, on so vast a scale as the mighty cartoons of the Greek stage, an Attic artist as little regarded the details of physiognomy, as a great architect would regard, on the frontispiece of a temple, the miniature enrichments that might be suitable in a drawing-room.

With these views upon the Grecian theatre, and other views that it might oppress the reader to dwell upon in this place, suddenly in December last an opportunity dawned—a golden opportunity, gleaming for a moment amongst thick clouds of impossibility that had gathered through three-and-twenty centuries—for seeing a Grecian tragedy presented on a British stage, and with the nearest approach possible to the beauty of those Athenian pomps which Sophocles, which Phidias, which Pericles created, beautified, promoted. I protest, when seeing the Edinburgh theatre's *programme*, that a note dated from the Vatican would not have startled me more, though sealed with the seal of the fisherman, and requesting the favour of my company to take coffee with the Pope. Nay, less: for channels there were through which I might have compassed a presentation to his Holiness; but the daughter of Œdipus, the holy Antigone, could I have hoped to see *her* "in the flesh?" This tragedy in an English version,* and with German music, had

* *Whose* version, I do not know. But one unaccountable error was forced on one's notice. *Thebes*, which by Milton and by every scholar is made a monosyllable, is here made a dissyllable. But *Thebez*, the dissyllable, is a *Syrian* city. It is true that Causabon deduces from

first been placed before the eyes and ears of our countrymen at Covent Garden during the winter of 1844-45. It was said to have succeeded. And soon after a report sprang up, from nobody knew where, that Mr. Murray meant to reproduce it in Edinburgh.

What more natural? Connected so nearly with the noblest house of scenic artists that ever shook the hearts of nations, nobler than ever raised undying echoes amidst the mighty walls of Athens, of Rome, of Paris, of London—himself a man of talents almost unparalleled for versatility—why should not Mr. Murray, always so liberal in an age so ungrateful to *his* profession, have sacrificed something to this occasion? He, that sacrifices so much, why not sacrifice to the grandeur of the Antique? I was then in Edinburgh, or in its neighbourhood; and one morning, at a casual assembly of some literary friends, present Professor Wilson, Messrs. J. F., C. N., L. C., and others, advocates, scholars, lovers of classical literature, we proposed two resolutions, of which the first was, that the news was too good to be true. That passed *nem. con.;* and the second resolution was *nearly* passing, viz., that a judgment would certainly fall upon Mr. Murray, had a second report proved true, viz., that not the Antigone, but a burlesque on the Antigone, was what he meditated to introduce. This turned out false;* the original report was suddenly revived eight or ten months after. Immediately on the heels of the promise the execution fol-

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a Syriac word meaning a case or enclosure (a *theca*), the name of Thebes, whether Bœotian or Egyptian. It is probable, therefore, that Thebes the hundred-gated of Upper Egypt, Thebes the seven-gated of Greece, and Thebes of Syria, had all one origin as regards the name. But this matters not; it is the *English* name that we are concerned with, which is, was, ever will be, and ought to be.

* "*False:*" or rather inaccurate. The burlesque was not on the Antigone, but on the Medea of Euripides; and very amusing.

lowed; and on the last (which I believe was the seventh) representation of the Antigone, I prepared myself to attend.

It had been generally reported as characteristic of myself, that in respect to all coaches, steamboats, railroads, wedding-parties, baptisms, and so forth, there was a fatal necessity of my being a trifle too late. Some malicious fairy, not invited to my own baptism, was supposed to have endowed me with this infirmity. It occurred to me that for once in my life I would show the scandalousness of such a belief by being a trifle too soon, say, three minutes. And no name more lovely for inaugurating such a change, no memory with which I could more willingly connect any reformation, than thine, dear, noble Antigone! Accordingly, because a certain man (whose name is down in my pocket book for no good) had told me that the doors of the theatre opened at half-past six, whereas, in fact, they opened at seven, there was I, if you please, freezing in the little colonnade of the theatre precisely as it wanted six-and-a-half minutes to seven,—six-and-a-half minutes observe too soon. Upon which this son of absurdity coolly remarked, that, if he had not set me half-an-hour forward, by my own showing, I should have been twenty-three-and-a-half minutes too late. What sophistry! But thus it happened (namely, through the wickedness of this man), that, upon entering the theatre, I found myself like Alexander Selkirk, in a frightful solitude, or like a single family of Arabs gathering at sun-set about a solitary coffee-pot in the boundless desert. Was there an echo raised? it was from my own steps. Did anybody cough? it was too evidently myself. I was the audience; I was the public. And, if any accident happened to the theatre, such as being burned down, Mr. Murray would certainly lay the blame upon me. My business, meantime, as a critic, was—to find out the most malicious

seat, *i.e.*, the seat from which all things would take the most unfavourable aspect. I could not suit myself in this respect; however bad a situation might seem, I still fancied some other as promising to be worse. And I was not sorry when an audience, by mustering in strength through all parts of the house, began to divide my responsibility as to burning down the building, and, at the same time, to limit the caprices of my distracted choice. At last, and precisely at half-past seven, the curtain drew up: a thing not strictly correct on a Grecian stage. But in theatres, as in other places, one must forget and forgive. Then the music began, of which in a moment. The overture slipped out at one ear, as it entered the other, which, with submission to Mr. Mendelssohn, is a proof that it must be horribly bad; for, if ever there lived a man that in music can neither forget nor forgive, that man is myself. Whatever is very good never perishes from my remembrance,—that is, sounds in my ears by intervals for ever; and for whatever is bad, I consign the author, in my wrath, to his own conscience, and to the tortures of his own discords. The most villanous things, however, have one merit; they are transitory as the best things; and *that* was true of the overture: it perished. Then, suddenly—O heavens! what a revelation of beauty! —forth stepped, walking in brightness, the most faultless of Grecian marbles, Miss Helen Faucit as Antigone. What perfection of Athenian sculpture! the noble figure, the lovely arms, the fluent drapery! What an unveiling of the ideal statuesque! Is it Hebe? is it Aurora? is it a goddess that moves before us? Perfect she is in form; perfect in attitude;

> "Beautiful exceedingly,
> Like a ladie from a far countrie.

Here was the redeeming jewel of the performance. It

flattered one's patriotic feelings, to see this noble young countrywoman realizing so exquisitely, and restoring to our imaginations, the noblest of Grecian girls. We critics, dispersed through the house, in the very teeth of duty and conscience, all at one moment unanimously fell in love with Miss Faucit. We felt in our remorse, and did not pretend to deny, that our duty was—to be savage. But when was the voice of duty listened to in the first uproars of passion? One thing I regretted, viz., that from the indistinctness of my sight for distant faces, I could not accurately discriminate Miss Faucit's features; but I was told by my next neighbour that they were as true to the antique as her figure. Miss Faucit's voice is fine and impassioned, being deep for a female voice: but in this organ lay also the only blemish of her personation. In her last scene, which is injudiciously managed by the Greek poet—too long by much, and perhaps misconceived in the modern way of understanding it—her voice grew too husky to execute the cadences of the intonations; yet, even in this scene, her fall to the ground, under the burden of her farewell anguish, was in a high degree sculpturesque through the whole succession of its stages.

Antigone in the written drama, and still more in the personated drama, draws all thoughts so entirely to herself, as to leave little leisure for examining the other parts; and, under such circumstances, the first impulse of a critic's mind is, that he ought to massacre all the rest indiscriminately; it being clearly his duty to presume everything bad which he is not unwillingly forced to confess good, or concerning which he retains no distinct recollection. But I, after the first glory of Antigone's *avatar* had subsided, applied myself to consider the general "setting" of this Theban jewel. Creon, whom the Greek tragic poets take delight in describing as a villain, has very little more to do (until

his own turn comes for grieving) than to tell Antigone, by minute-guns, that die she must. "Well, uncle, don't say that so often," is the answer which, secretly, the audience whispers to Antigone. Our uncle grows tedious; and one wishes at last that he himself could be "put up the spout." Mr. Glover, from the sepulchral depth of his voice, gave effect to the odious Creontic menaces; and, in the final lamentations over the dead body of Hæmon, being a man of considerable intellectual power, Mr. Glover drew the part into a prominence which it is the fault of Sophocles to have authorized in that situation; for the closing sympathies of the spectator ought not to be diverted, for a moment, from Antigone.

But the chorus, how did *they* play their part? Mainly *their* part must have always depended on the character of the music: even at Athens, that must have been very much the case, and at Edinburgh altogether, because dancing on the Edinburgh stage there was none. How came *that* about? For the very word "orchestral," suggests to a Greek ear *dancing*, as the leading element in the choral functions. Was it because dancing with us is never used mystically and symbolically, never used in our religious services? Still it would have been possible to invent solemn and intricate dances, that might have appeared abundantly significant, if expounded by impassioned music. But that music of Mendelssohn!—like it I cannot. Say not that Mendelssohn is a great composer. He *is* so. But here he was voluntarily abandoning the resources of his own genius, and the support of his divine art, in quest of a chimera; that is, in quest of a thing called Greek music, which for *us* seems far more irrecoverable than the "Greek fire." I myself, from an early date, was a student of this subject. I read book after book upon it; and each successive book

sank me lower into darkness, until I had so vastly improved in ignorance, that I could myself have written a quarto upon it, which all the world should not have found it possible to understand. It should have taken three men to construe one sentence. I confess, however, to not having yet seen the writings upon this impracticable theme of Colonel Perronet Thompson. To write experimental music for choruses that are to support the else meagre outline of a Greek tragedy, will not do. Let experiments be tried upon worthless subjects; and if this of Mendelssohn's be Greek music, the sooner it takes itself off the better. Sophocles will be delivered from an incubus, and we from an affliction of the auditory nerves.

It strikes me that I see the source of this music. We, that were learning German some thirty years ago, must remember the noise made at that time about Mendelssohn, the Platonic philosopher. And why? Was there anything particular in "Der Phædon," on the immortality of the soul? Not at all; it left us quite as mortal as it found us; and it has long since been found mortal itself. Its venerable remains are still to be met with in many worm-eaten trunks, pasted on the lids of which I have myself perused a matter of thirty pages, except for a part that had been too closely perused by worms. But the key to all the popularity of the Platonic Mendelssohn is to be sought in the whimsical nature of German liberality, which, in those days, forced Jews into paying toll at the gates of cities, under the title of "swine," but caressed their infidel philosophers. Now, in this category of Jew and infidel, stood the author of "Phædon." He was certainly liable to toll as a hog; but, on the other hand, he was much admired as one who despised the Pentateuch. Now *that* Mendelssohn, whose learned labours lined our trunks, was the father of

this Mendelssohn, whose Greek music afflicts our ears. Naturally, then, it strikes me, that as "papa" Mendelssohn attended the synagogue to save appearances, the filial Mendelssohn would also attend it. I likewise attended the synagogue now and then at Liverpool, and elsewhere. We all three have been cruising in the same latitudes; and, trusting to my own remembrances, I should pronounce that Mendelssohn has stolen his Greek music from the synagogue. There was, in the first chorus of the "Antigone," one sublime ascent (and once repeated), that rang to heaven: it might have entered into the music of Jubal's lyre, or have glorified the timbrel of Miriam. All the rest, tried by the deep standard of my own feeling, that clamours for the impassioned in music, even as the daughter of the horse-leech says, "Give, give," is as much without meaning as most of the Hebrew chanting that I heard at the Liverpool synagogue. I advise Mr. Murray, in the event of his ever reviving the "Antigone," to make the chorus sing the Hundredth Psalm, rather than Mendelssohn's music; or, which would be better still, to import from Lancashire the Handel chorus-singers.

But then, again, whatever change in the music were made, so as to "better the condition" of the poor audience, something should really be done to "better the condition" of the poor chorus. Think of these worthy men, in their white and sky-blue liveries, kept standing the whole evening; no seats allowed, no dancing, no tobacco; nothing to console them but Antigone's beauty; and all this in our climate, latitude fifty-five degrees, 30th of December, and Fahrenheit groping about, I don't pretend to know where, but clearly on his road down to the wine-cellar. Mr. Murray, I am perfectly sure, is too liberal to have grudged the

expense, if he could have found any classic precedent for treating the chorus to a barrel of ale. Ale, he may object, is an unclassical tipple; but perhaps not. Xenophon, the most Attic of prose writers, mentions pointedly in his *Anabasis*, that the Ten Thousand, when retreating through snowy mountains, and in circumstances very like our General Elphinstone's retreat from Cabul, came upon a considerable stock of bottled ale. To be sure, the poor ignorant man calls it *barley-wine* [οἶνος κριθινος]: but the flavour was found so perfectly classical that not one man of the ten thousand, not even the Attic bee himself, is reported to have left any protest against it, or indeed to have left much of the ale.

But stop: perhaps I am intruding upon other men's space. Speaking, therefore, now finally to the principal question, How far did this memorable experiment succeed? I reply, that, in the sense of realizing all that the joint revivers proposed to realize, it succeeded; and failed only where these revivers had themselves failed to comprehend the magnificent tendencies of Greek tragedy, or where the limitations of our theatres, arising out of our habits and social differences, had made it impossible to succeed. In London, I believe that there are nearly thirty theatres, and many more, if every place of amusement (not bearing the technical name of *theatre*) were included. All these must be united to compose a building such as that which received the vast audiences, and consequently the vast spectacles, of some ancient cities. And yet, from a great mistake in our London and Edinburgh attempts to imitate the stage of the Greek theatres, little use was made of such advantages as really *were* at our disposal. The possible depth of the Edinburgh stage was not laid open. Instead of a regal

hall in Thebes, I protest I took it for the *boudoir* of Antigone. It was painted in light colours, an error which was abominable, though possibly meant by the artist (but quite unnecessarily) as a proper ground for relieving the sumptuous dresses of the leading performers. The doors of entrance and exit were most unhappily managed. As to the dresses, those of Creon, of his queen, and of the two loyal sisters, were good: chaste, and yet princely. The dress of the chorus was as bad as bad could be: a few surplices borrowed from Episcopal chapels, or rather the ornamented *albes*, &c., from any rich Roman Catholic establishment, would have been more effective. The *Coryphæus* himself seemed, to my eyes, no better than a railway labourer, fresh from tunnelling or boring, and wearing a *blouse* to hide his working dress. These ill-used men ought to "strike" for better clothes, in case Antigone should again revisit the glimpses of an Edinburgh moon; and at the same time they might mutter a hint about the ale. But the great hindrances to a perfect restoration of a Greek tragedy, lie in peculiarities of our theatres that cannot be removed, because bound up with their purposes. I suppose that Salisbury Plain would seem too vast a theatre: but at least a Cathedral would be required in dimensions, York Minster or Cologne. Lamp-light gives to us some advantages which the ancients had not. But much art would be required to train and organize the lights and the masses of superincumbent gloom, that should be such as to allow no calculation of the dimensions overhead. Aboriginal night should brood over the scene, and the sweeping movements of the scenic groups: bodily expression should be given to the obscure feeling of that dark power which moved in ancient tragedy: and we should be made to know why it is that, with the one exception of the *Persæ*, founded on

the second Persian invasion,* in which Æschylus, the author, was personally a combatant, and therefore a *contemporary*, not one of the thirty-four Greek tragedies surviving, but recedes into the dusky shades of the heroic, or even fabulous times.

A failure, therefore, I think the "Antigone," in relation to an object that for us is unattainable; but a failure worth more than many ordinary successes. We are all deeply indebted to Mr. Murray's liberality, in two senses; to his liberal interest in the noblest section of ancient literature, and to his liberal disregard of expense. To have seen a Grecian play is a great remembrance. To have seen Miss Helen Faucit's Antigone, were *that* all, with her bust, ὡς ἀγαλματος,† and her uplifted arm "pleading against unjust tribunals," is worth—what is it worth? Worth the money? How mean a thought! To see *Helen*, to see Helen of Greece, was the chief prayer of Marlow's Dr. Fastus; the chief gift which he exacted from the fiend. To see Helen of Greece? Dr. Fastus, we *have* seen her: Mr. Murray is the Mephistopheles that showed her to us. It was cheap at the price of a journey to Siberia, and is the next best thing to having seen Waterloo at sunset on the 18th of June 1815.‡

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* But in this instance, perhaps, distance of space, combined with the unrivalled grandeur of the war, was felt to equiponderate the distance of time, Susa, the Persian capital of Susa, being fourteen hundred miles from Athens.

† Στερνα θ'ως ἀγαλματος, *her bosom as the bosom of a statue;* an expression of Euripides, and applied, I think, to Polyxena at the moment of her sacrifice on the tomb of Achilles, as the bride that was being married to him at the moment of his death.

‡ Amongst the questions which occurred to me as requiring an answer, in connexion with this revival, was one with regard to the comparative fitness of the Antigone for giving a representative idea

of the Greek stage. I am of opinion that it was the worst choice which could have been made; and for the very reason which no doubt governed that choice, viz., because the austerity of the tragic passion is disfigured by a love episode. Rousseau in his letter to D'Alembert upon his article *Genève* in the French Encyclopédie, asks,—"*Qui est-ce qui doute que, sur nos théâtres, la meilleure pièce de Sophocle ne tombât tout-à-plat?*" And his reason (as collected from other passages) is—because an interest derived from the passion of sexual love can rarely be found on the Greek stage, and yet cannot be dispensed with on that of Paris. But why was it so rare on the Greek stage? Not from accident, but because it did not harmonize with the principle of that stage, and its vast overhanging gloom. It is the great infirmity of the French, and connected constitutionally with the gaiety of their temperament, that they cannot sympathize with this terrific mode of grandeur. We can. And for *us* the choice should have been more purely and severely Grecian; whilst the slenderness of the plot in any Greek tragedy would require a far more effective support from tumultuous movement in the chorus. Even the French are not uniformly insensible to this Grecian grandeur. I remember that Voltaire, amongst many just remarks on the Electra of Sophocles, mixed with others that are *not* just, bitterly condemns this demand for a love fable on the French stage, and illustrates its extravagance by the French tragedy on the same subject, of Crebillon. He (in default of any more suitable resource) has actually made Electra, whose character on the Greek stage is painfully vindictive, in love with an imaginary son of Ægisthus, her father's murderer. Something should also have been said of Mrs. Leigh Murray's Ismene, which was very effective in supporting and in relieving the magnificent impression of Antigone. I ought also to have added a note on the scenic mask, and the common notion (not authorized, I am satisfied, by the practice in the *supreme* era of Pericles) that it exhibited a Janus face, the windward side exhibiting grief or horror, the leeward expressing tranquillity. Believe it not, reader. But on this and other points, it will be better to speak circumstantially, in a separate paper on the Greek drama, as a majestic but very exclusive and almost, if one may so say, bigoted form of the scenic art.

TRADITIONS OF THE RABBINS.

THE chief portion of the Rabbinical fantasies is derived from Indian fables; and among those the transmigration of souls seems to have made the most powerful impression. It is singular that this doctrine, utterly unsupported as it is by any approach to evidence, should have yet prevailed among a vast multitude, or rather the great majority, of ancient mankind; and the question is still dubious to which of the three most learned and investigating nations of antiquity the doctrine is first due. It belonged at once to India, Egypt, and Greece. Yet its origin may probably be traced to India, and there to some of those corruptions of the primal revelation, and of the second birth of mankind, the spirit transmitted from the antediluvian race into the descendants of Noah, the representative of the first man, and beginner of a new patriarchal line. The doctrine, too, served the purpose of offering an apparent explanation of that mysterious Providence by which the guilty sometimes exhibit striking examples of prosperity. It further gave some equally obscure hope of an explanation of the uses, partial sufferings, and general degradation of the lower animal creation. The transfer of the soul of a tyrant to the body of a tiger seemed not unnatural; of the glutton's

to the hog, or the robber's to the wolf, the vulture, or the hyena: all displayed a species of natural justice which might gradually render the transmigration probable to the quick and figurative fancies of the East. Their style of expression, too, the forms and emblems by which, in the early rudeness of penmanship they laboured to describe moral and mental qualities, tended to reinforce the doctrine. The outline of a dog expressed the persevering or the faithful, the lion characterized the bold, or the eagle gave the natural conception of lofty aspirings and indomitable ardour. For this doctrine the Rabbinical name is *Gilgul Neshameth* (the revolving of souls).

But the Rabbins sometimes deform the poetical part of this conception by their absurd habits of *particularizing*. In the *Nishmeth Chajim* we are thus told that the soul of the man who transgresses by attempting to provoke another to anger, passes inevitably into a beast. Those who were engaged in the rebellion at the building of Babel were punished by three judgments. The best among them were punished by the confusion of tongues. The second rank, or those who attempted to set up the idol, were sent to inhabit cats and monkeys. The third more ambitious, and more impious, who attempted to scale the heavens and assault the divine throne with earthly weapons, were flung down from their height, and transformed into evil spirits, whose torment is, to be always in restless and agonizing motion. A prevailing cabalistic doctrine is the transmigration of the human spirit into cattle. But this depends on the degree of guilt. "If he hath committed one sin more than the number of his good works," he must undergo transmigration. The soul of the man who thinks on his good works is the more fortunate; for, though he must

undergo the degradation of passing into the form of a beast, yet it is of a clean or ruminant one. But the soul of the profligate, or the shedder of blood, passes into an unclean beast, the camel, the rabbit, or the hog. The sensualist is generally condemned to the form of a reptile.

Rabbinism has continued full of trivial observances; and the Jew of the present day is harassed with a weight of ceremonies, which exceed the heaviest burdens of the ancient law. This yoke he has laid upon himself. A rigour, worthy of the Pharisee, is exercised in minute and perpetual trifling worthy of a child. One of those ordinances which pass through every portion of Jewish society, relates to the smoothness of their knife-blades. The knife with which the Jew puts bird or beast to death must be without jags or notches of any kind. The *Avodath Hakkodesh* assigns the important reason: "Sometimes the soul of a righteous man is found in a clean beast or fowl. The Jews are therefore commanded to have their killing-knives without notches, to the end that they may give as little pain as possible to the souls contained therein."

The treatise *Ginek Hammelech* gives the following instance of the penal effect of the transmigration as detailed by the Rabbi Mosche Gallante, chief judge of Jerusalem: "When, in the first ages of Israel, the Rabbi Isaac Lurja —blessed be his memory!—was passing through the Holy Land, he came faint and weary to a grove of olives, and there laid him down. He said to the Rabbi Mosche, 'Here let us rest;' but the Rabbi would not, for he looked round, and the place whereon they lay was a grave of the wicked. But the Rabbi Isaac, pointing to a tree above, on which sat a raven loudly croaking, said, 'There is no spirit in this grave. Dost thou not remember Nis-

math, the extortioner of the city?' 'I remember him well,' answered the Rabbi Mosche; 'he was the grand collector of the customs, and was cursed every day he lived for his cruelty. He robbed the rich, and he trampled on the poor; the old he deprived of their property, and the young of their inheritance. May his name be black as night, and his memory be buried deep as the bottom of the sea.' 'He is sorry enough now for his oppression,' said the Rabbi Isaac Lurja. 'The King of Judgment hath sentenced his evil soul to be imprisoned in the body of that raven, and its complainings are its sorrows for its state, and its supplications to me to pray for its release.' 'And wilt thou pray for the son of evil?' asked the Rabbi Mosche. 'Sooner will I pray that this staff be the serpent of the magician,' answered Rabbi Isaac; and thereupon rising, he flung it at the raven, which, with a yell of fury, waved its wings, and shot up in agony into the bosom of the clouds."

But, even in its original state, the soul, according to the Rabbins, is under a multiform shape. They hold that the human soul has no less than five different forms or stages. "The first is the *Nephesh*, the bodily soul. The second is the *Ruach*, the spirit. The third is the *Neshama*, the more celestial soul. The fourth, the *Chaja*, the life. The fifth is the *Jechida*, the solitary. And these divisions have their appropriate occasions and uses, every remarkable period of human existence requiring a due reinforcement of the soul, as a principle. "In the working and week days, between the new moon and the feast-day, thou must be content with having the Nephesh. On the Feast-day comes the Ruach. On the day of Atonement comes the Neshama. On the Sabbath comes the Chaja, or supernumerary soul, and in the final and future life of happiness comes the

Jechida." The tenet that on the Sabbath man receives an additional soul, is established among the Rabbins. But the extravagance of those conceptions is occasionally qualified among the latter commentators by the explanation that those diversities of the human spirit simply mean the gradual advance of the soul from excellence to excellence in the course of prayer, and the study of divine things.

By a singular improvement on the pagan doctrine of the metempsychosis, there is also a *reverse* change of bodies; and the spirit which had inhabited the form of a wild beast becomes occasionally the inhabitant of the human shape. The tenet of the famous Rabbi Lurja, in the treatise *Ginek Hammelech*, is, that the violences and follies so conspicuous and unaccountable on human grounds, in certain individuals, are explained by this transmission. The vulture, the panther, the jackal, the fox, transmit their spirits into men, and thence we obviously derive the gluttonous, the rapacious, the base, the crafty, the whole train of the profligate and the mischievous of mankind; the race whom no precept can guide, no fear can restrain, and no principle can regulate; the whole lineage of the desperate and impracticable among men.

Such are the doctrines in their ruder state. But they sometimes take a finer and more fanciful shape, and rise into the boldness and imagery of oriental fiction. "What," says the *Shaar Aikkune*, "is the fall of the guiltiest of the guilty; of those who have made themselves abominable in the sight of earth and heaven; of those who have exulted in their sins; of the man who has slain a son of Israel; of the apostate who has denied the supremacy of the religion of Israel over all other religions on the earth; of the spy who has betrayed a Jew, or a community of Jews? Shall they ascend to heaven? shall they be worthy to plant

their steps in the courts of the palaces of the angels? No; the angels are their punishers; they utter the sentence of ruin against them; they drive them downward, and summon a band of evil spirits to chase them round the world. The dark tormentors rush after them with goads and whips of fire; their chase is ceaseless; they hunt them from the plain to the mountain, from the mountain to the river, from the river to the ocean, from the ocean round the circle of the earth. Thus the tormented fly in terror, and the tormentors follow in vengeance, until the time decreed is done. Then the doomed sink into dust and ashes. Another beginning of existence, the commencement of a second trial, awaits them. They become clay, they take the nature of the stone and of the mineral; they are water, fire, air; they roll in the thunder; they float in the cloud; they rush in the whirlwind. They change again. They enter into the shapes of the vegetable tribes; they live in the shrub, the flower, and the tree. Ages on ages pass in their transformations; they wither; they are tossed by the tempest; they are trampled by man; they are smote by the axe; they are consumed by fire. Another change comes. They enter into the shape of the beast, the bird, the fish, the insect; they traverse the desert, they destroy, and are destroyed; they soar into the clouds; they shoot through the depths of the ocean; they burrow their invisible way through the recesses of the earth; they come by devouring millions in the locust; they sting in the scorpion; they crumble away the roots of vegetation in the hosts of the ant; they destroy the promise of the year in the caterpillar; they drive the flocks and herds into famine and madness in the hornet and the fly zebib. They at last are suffered to ascend into the rank of human beings once more. Yet their ascent is step by step. They are first

slaves; they see their first light in the land of misery. The African or the Asiatic sun scorches them by day; they are frozen with the dews of the night; they live in perpetual toil; their frames are lacerated with the scourge; their steps clank with the chain; their souls faint within them in hopeless misery, till they long to die. At last they die, and again commence life in a higher rank; they are now free, but they cultivate a sterile soil; they are impoverished, trampled, tortured by tyrant rulers; they are dragged to war by fierce ambition; they are pursued, starved, ruined by furious war; they are thrown into dungeons; they are banished; and, above all, their souls are degraded by the darkness of superstitions bathed in blood. They are bowed down to idols which they dread while they despise; they repeat prayers to things which they know to be the work of men's hands, stocks and stones, which yet from infancy they have taught themselves to adore; and thus drag on life in torture of mind, in shame, the twilight of truth, and the bewilderment of ignorance; they worship with their lips, yet scorn with their hearts. But their scorn breaks forth; they are grasped by power; they resist; they are dragged to the rack and the flame; they are slain. The final change is now come. They are Israelites. They have risen into the first class of mankind; they are of the chosen people; the sons of Abraham, to whom has been given the promise of universal dominion. Joy to them unspeakable, if they hold their rank; misery tenfold if they fall, for their fall now will be without redemption."

Those are the theories, and they bear evidence of that mixture of Greek philosophy and Asiatic invention, which forms the romance of the early ages. But they are sometimes embodied into narratives of singular imagination.

The Thousand and One Nights are rivalled, and the Sultana Scheherazade might find some of her originality thrown into the shade by those tales. The Widow of Hebron is an example.

"The Rabbi Joseph, the son of Jehoshaphat, had been praying from noon until the time of the going down of the sun, when a messenger from the chief of the Synagogue of Hebron came to him, and besought him to go forth and pray for a woman who was grievously tormented. The Rabbi, ever awake to the call of human sorrow, rose from his knees, girt his robe round him, and went forth. The messenger led him to a building deep in the forest that grew on the south side of the hill of Hebron. The building had more the look of the palace of one of the princes of Israel than of a private dwelling. But if its exterior struck the gaze of the Rabbi, its apartments excited his astonishment. He passed through a succession of halls worthy of the days of the first Herod, when Jerusalem raised her head again after the ruin of Antiochus, when her long civil wars were past, and she had become once more the most magnificent city of the Eastern world. Marble columns, silken veils suspended from the capitals of the pillars, tissues wrought with the embroidery of Sidon, and coloured with the incomparable dyes of Cæsarea, vases of Armenian crystal, and tables of Grecian mosaic, filled chambers, in which were trains of attendants of every climate, Ethiopian, Indian, Persian, and Greek, all habited in the richest dresses. All that met the eye wore an air of the most sumptuous and habitual magnificence.

"The Rabbi, however, had but a short time for wonder, before he was summoned to the chamber of the sick person. But all the costliness that he had seen before was eclipsed by the singular brilliancy of this apartment. It was small,

and evidently contrived for the secluded hours of an individual, but everything was sumptuous, all gold or pearl, amber or lapis-lazuli. And in the midst of this pomp reclined, half-sitting, half-lying, on huge pillows of Shiraz silk, a female, whose beauty, in all the languor of pain, riveted even the ancient eye of the pious Rabbi. The sufferer was young; but the flush that from time to time broke across her countenance, and then left it to the paleness of the grave, showed that she was on the verge of the tomb. The Rabbi was famous for his knowledge of herbs and minerals, and he offered her some of those medicaments which he had found useful in arresting the progress of decay. The dying beauty thanked him, and said in a faint voice that she had implored his coming, not to be cured of a disease which she knew to be fatal, but to disburden her mind of a secret which had already hung heavy on her, and which must extinguish her existence before the morn. The Rabbi, on hearing this, besought her to make him the depositary of her sorrow, if he could serve her; but, if he could not, forbade her to tell him what might hang darkly on the memory of a man of Israel. 'I am the daughter,' said she, 'of your friend the Rabbi Ben Bechai, whose memory be blessed, but the widow of a prince, the descendant of Ishmael. You see the riches in this house; but they are not the riches of the sons of the Desert. They were desperately gained, bitterly enjoyed, and now they are repented of when it is too late.' As the lovely being spoke, her countenance changed; she suddenly writhed and tossed with pain, and in her agony cried out words that pierced the holy man's ears with terror. He cast his eyes on the ground and prayed, and was strengthened; but when he looked up again, an extraordinary change had come upon the woman's countenance. Its paleness was gone, her cheeks were burn-

ing, her hollow eyes were darting strange light; her lips, which had been thin and faded as the falling leaf, were full, crimson, and quivering with wild passion and magic energy. The Rabbi could not believe that he saw the dying woman by whose side he had so lately knelt, in the fierce and bold, yet still beautiful creature, that now gazed full and fearless upon him. 'You see me now,' said she, 'with surprise; but these are the common changes of my suffering. The deadly disease, that is sinking me to the dust, thus varies its torment hour by hour; but I must submit and suffer.' The Rabbi knew by those words that the woman was tormented with an evil spirit. Upon this he sent for a famous unction, which had been handed down to him from his ancestor the Rabbi Joseph, who had been physician to King Herod the Great, and had exorcised the evil spirit out of the dying king. On its being brought, he anointed the forehead of the woman, her eyes, and the tips of her fingers. He then made a fire of citron-wood and cinnamon, and threw on it incense. As the smoke arose, he bowed her head gently over it, that she might imbibe the odour in her nostrils, which was an established way of expelling the evil spirit.

"The woman's countenance now changed again; it was once more pale with pain, and she cried out in her torment; at length in strong agony she uttered many words. But the Rabbi perceived, from her fixed eyes and motionless lips, that it was the spirit within her that spoke the words. It said: 'Why am I to be disturbed with anointings and incense? Why am I to hear the sound of prayer, and be smitten with the voice of the holy? Look round the chamber. Is it not full of us and our punishers? Are we not pursued for ever by the avenging angels? Do they not hold scourges of fire in their hands, and fill every

wound they make with thrice-distilled poison of the tree Asgard, that grows by the lake of fire? I was an Egyptian; five hundred years ago I lived at the court of Ptolemy Philadelphus. I longed for power, and I obtained it; I longed to possess the fairest daughters of the land, and I possessed them. I longed for riches, and I practised all evil to gain them. I was at length accused before the king of sorcery. I longed for revenge on my accuser, and I enjoyed my revenge. I stabbed him as he was sleeping in his chamber. The murder was known; I was forced to fly. But I first sent a present of perfumed cakes of Damascus to the mistress of the man who made the discovery; they feasted on them together, and together they died. The ship in which I fled was overtaken by a storm. I was charged with having brought the anger of Heaven on the vessel. I was seized, and about to be slain. I drove my dagger through the captain, sprang overboard, and reached the shore. From it, in triumphant revenge, I saw the ship and all the crew perish in the waters. I was now in the Great Desert of Africa; and was starving and scorched, until I lay down to die. But at the last moment an old man came from among the tombs, and offered me bread and water. I followed him to his dwelling in the tombs. He scoffed at my complaints of ill-fortune, and swore to place me once again at the height of my wishes, if I would be ready at his call at the end of a hundred years. I could have then drunk fire and blood in my fury against mankind, and my thirst of possession. I swore to be his, and prepared to begin my hundred years of enjoyment.

'I returned to Egypt. I had been supposed to have sunk to the bottom of the waters with the wreck of the vessel My countenance was no longer the same. No man remembered me. I began my career. I was full of wild ambi-

tion, eager desire, and matchless sagacity. I rapidly outstripped all rivalry. I rose to the first rank under the Ptolemies. I enjoyed the delight of ruining every man who had formerly thwarted me. All Egypt rang with my fame. I had secret enemies, and strange rumours of the means of my perpetual success began to be spread. But I had spies everywhere; a whisper was repaid by death. A frown was avenged like an open accusation. My name became a universal terror. But I had my followers and flatterers only the more. I trampled on mankind. I revelled in seeing the proud grovelling at my feet. I corrupted the lowly, I terrified the high, I bound the strong to my basest services. I was hated and cursed, but I was feared. Daggers, poison, secret rage, and public abhorrence, all were levelled against me; I encountered them all, defied them all, challenged and triumphed over them all. I was the most successful, the most envied, and the most wretched of human beings. But my passions at length changed their colour; I had lost all sense of enjoyment; habit had worn its sense away; the feast, rank, splendour, the adulation of the great, the beauty of woman, all had grown tasteless and wearisome. Life was withering. But I had a fierce enjoyment still, and one that grew keener with the advance of years. I rejoiced in the degradation of my fellow-men. I revelled in corrupting the mercenary, in hardening the ferocious, in inflaming the vindictive, in stimulating the violent. I lived, too, in an evil time of the monarchy. Desperate excesses in the court were all but rivalled by furious vice in the people. The old age of the Greek dynasty was a sinking of the soul and body of dominion together. The deepest sensuality, the wildest waste of public wealth, the meanest extortion, the most reckless tyranny, all that could fester the memory of a nation, were the daily crimes of the decaying court of

the Ptolemies. I had come at the right time. Invested with power which made the monarch a cipher, I exulted in the coming ruin; I blinded the eyes of this voluptuous tyranny to its inevitable fate; I had but little to do in urging it to new crime, but I did that little. I wove round it a web of temptation that the strength even of virtue could have scarcely broken, but into which the eager dissoluteness of the Egyptian court plunged as if it had been the most signal gift of fortune. I exulted in the prospect of my accomplished task of precipitating a guilty palace and people into utter ruin; but in the fever of my exultation I had forgot that my time was measured. At a banquet in the king's chamber I saw a guest whose face struck me as having been known to me at some remote period. He was the chieftain of one of the Bactrian tribes, who now came to offer compensation for some outrages of his wild horsemen on a caravan returning from the Indus to Egypt. He was a man of marvellous age, the signs of which he bore in his visage, but of the most singular sagacity. His reputation had gone forth among the people; and all the dealers in forbidden arts, the magi, the soothsayers, and the consulters of the dead, acknowledged their skill outdone by this exhausted and decrepit barbarian. The first glance of his keen eye awoke me to strange and fearful remembrances, but his first word put an end to all doubt, and made me feel the agonies of despair. At the sound of his voice I recognised the old man of the tombs, and felt that the terrible time for his payment was come. It was true; I was to die; I was to suffer for the long banquet of life; I was to undergo the torture of the place of all torture; I was to suffer a hideous retribution for the days of my triumph. They had been many, but they now seemed to me but a moment. Days, months, years, were compressed

into a thought, and I groaned within my inmost soul at the frenzy which had bound me to a master so soon to demand the penalty to the uttermost.

" 'I fled from the royal chamber; my mind was a whirl of terror, shame, loathing, hatred, and remorse. I seized my sword, and was about to plunge it into my heart, and end a suspense more stinging than despair, when I found my hand arrested, and, on turning, saw the visage of the Bactrian. I indignantly attempted to wrest the sword from him, and drive it home to a heart burning with the poison of the soul. But he held it with a grasp to which my utmost strength was a child's. I might as well have forced a rock from its base. He smiled, and said, "I am Sammael. You should have known, that to resist me was as absurd as to expect pity from our race. I am one of the princes of evil; I reign over the south-east; I fill the Bactrian deserts with rapine, the Persian chambers with profligacy, and am now come to fling the firebrands of civil war into this court of effeminate Asiatics, savage Africans, and treacherous Greeks. The work was nearly done without me; but Sammael must not let the wickedness of man triumph alone. He tempts, ensnares, betrays, and he must have his reward like mankind. This kingdom will soon be a deluge of blood where it is not a deluge of conflagration, and a deluge of conflagration where it is not a deluge of blood." As he spoke his countenance grew fiery, his voice became awful, and I fell at his feet without the power to struggle or to speak. He was on the point of plunging me through the crust of the earth ten thousand times ten thousand fathoms deep, below the roots of the ocean, to abide in the region of rack and flame. He had already lifted his heel to trample me down. But he paused, and uttered a groan. I saw a burst of light that covered him from the

head to the foot, and in which he writhed as if it had been a robe of venom. I looked up and saw a giant shape, one of the sons of Paradise who watch over the children of Israel, standing before the evil King. They fought for me with lances bright and swift as flashes of lightning. But Sammael was overthrown. He sprang from the ground, and, cursing, spread his wings and flew up into a passing thunder-cloud. The son of Paradise still stood over me with a countenance of wrath, and said, "Child of guilt, why shall not vengeance be wrought upon the guilty? Why shall not the subject of the evil one be stricken with his punishment, and be chained on the burning rocks of his dungeon, that are deep as the centre of the earth, and wide as its surface spread out ten thousand times?" I clasped his knees, and bathed them with tears; I groaned, and beat my bosom in the terrors of instant death. The bright vision still held the blow suspended, and saying "that I had been preserved from ruin only by being the descendant of an Israelitish mother, but that my life had earned punishment which must be undergone;" as he spoke the words, he laid his hand upon my forehead with a weight which seemed to crush my brain.

"'I shrank and sprang away in fear; I rushed wildly through the palace, through the streets, through the highways. I felt myself moving with a vigour of limb and savage swiftness that astonished me. On the way I overtook a troop of Alexandrian merchants going towards the desert of the Pentapolis. I felt a strange instinct to rush among them; I was hungry and parched with thirst. I sprang among a group who had sat down beside one of the wells that border the sands. They all rose up at my sight with a hideous outcry. Some fled, some threw themselves down behind the shelter of the thickets, but some seized

their swords and lances, and stood to defend themselves. I glowed with unaccountable rage! The sight of their defiance doubly inflamed me; the very gleam of their steel seemed to me the last insult, and I rushed forward to make them repent of their temerity. At the same instant I felt a sudden thrill of pain; a spear, thrown by a powerful hand, was quivering in my side. I bounded resistlessly on my assailant, and in another moment saw him lying in horrid mutilation at my feet. The rest instantly lost all courage at the sight, and, flinging down their weapons, scattered in all directions, crying for help. But those dastards were not worth pursuit. The well was before me; I was burning with thirst and fatigue, and I stooped down to drink of its pure and smooth water. What was my astonishment when I saw a lion stooping in the mirror of the well! I distinctly saw the shaggy mane, the huge bloodshot eyes, the rough and rapidly moving lips, the pointed tusks, and all red with recent gore. I shrank in strange perturbation. I returned to the well again, stooped to drink, and again saw the same furious monster stoop to its calm, blue mirror. A horrid thought crossed my mind. I had known the old doctrine of the Egyptians and Asiatics, which denounced punishment in the shape of brutes to the guilty dead. Had I shared this hideous punishment? I again gave a glance at the water. The sight was now conviction. I no longer wondered at the wild outcry of the caravan, at the hurried defence, at the strange flight, at the ferocious joy with which I tore down my enemy, and trampled and rent him till he had lost all semblance of man. The punishment had come upon me. My fated spirit had left its human body, and had entered into the shape of the savage inhabitant of the wilderness. The thought was one of indescribable horror. I bounded away with furious speed,

I tore up the sands, I darted my fangs into my own flesh, and sought for some respite from hideous thought in the violence of bodily pain. I flew along the limitless plains of the desert, from night till morning, and from morning till night, in hope to exhaust bitter memory by fatigue. All was in vain. I lay down to die, but the vast strength of my frame was proof against fatigue.

"'I rushed from hill to valley with the speed of the whirlwind, and still I was but the terror of the wilderness, all whose tenants flew before me. I sought the verge of the little villages, where the natives hide their heads from the scorching sun and the deadly dews. I sought them, to perish by their arrows and lances. I was often wounded; I often carried away with me their barbed iron in my flesh. I often writhed in the agony of poisoned wounds. Still I lived. My life was the solitary existence of the wild beast. I hunted down the antelope, the boar, and the goat, and gorged upon their blood. I then slept, until hunger, or the cry of the hunter, roused me once more to commence the same career of flight, pursuit, watching, and wounds. This life was hideous. With the savage instincts of the wild beast, I retained the bitter recollections of my earlier nature, and every hour was felt with the keenness of a punishment allotted by a Judge too powerful to be questioned, and to stern to be propitiated. How long I endured this state of evil I had no means of knowing. I had lost the human faculty of measuring the flight of time. I howled in rage at the light of the moon as I roamed through the wilderness; I shrank from the broad blaze of the sun, which at once parched my blood and warned my prey of my approach; I felt the tempests of the furious season, which drove all the feebler animals from the face of the land to hide in caves and woods. I felt the renewed fires

of the season when the sun broke through his clouds once more, and the earth, refreshed with the rains, began to be withered like the weed in the furnace. But, for all other purposes, the moon and the sun rose alike to my mind, embodied as it was in the brute, and sharing the narrowness and obscurity of the animal intellect. Months and years passed unnoted. In the remnant of understanding that was left to me in vengeance, I laboured in vain to recount the periods of my savage suffering; but the periods of my human guilt were, by some strange visitation of wrath, always and instantly ready at my call. I there saw my whole career with a distinctness which seemed beyond all human memory. I lived over every hour, every thought, every passion, every pang. Then the instincts of my degraded state would seize me again; I was again the devourer, the insatiate drinker of blood, the terror of the African, the ravager of the sheepfold, the monarch of the forest. But my life of horror seemed at length to approach its limit; I felt the gradual approach of decay. My eyes, once keen as the lightning, could no longer discern the prey on the edge of the horizon; my massive strength grew weary; my limbs, the perfection of muscular strength and activity, became ponderous, and bore me no longer with the lightness that had given the swiftest gazelle to my grasp. I shrank within my cavern, and was to be roused only by the hunger which I bore long after it had begun to gnaw me. One day I dragged out my tardy limbs, urged by famine to seize upon the buffaloes of a tribe passing across the desert. I sprang upon the leader of the herd, and had already dragged it to the earth, when the chieftain of the tribe rushed forward with his lance, and, uttering a loud outcry, I turned from the fallen buffalo to attack the hunter. But in that glance I saw an aspect which I remembered after

the lapse of so many years of misery. The countenance of the being who had crushed me out of human nature was before me. I felt the powerful pressure; a pang new to me, a sting of human feeling, pierced through my frame. I dared not rush upon this strange avenger; I cowered in the dust; I would have licked his feet. My fury, my appetite for carnage, my ruthless delight in rending and devouring the helpless creatures of the wilderness had passed away. I doubly loathed my degradation, and, if I could have uttered a human voice, I should at this moment have implored the being before me to plunge his spear into my brain, and extinguish all consciousness at once. As the thought arose, I looked on him once more; he was no longer the African; he wore the grandeur and fearful majesty of Azrael. I knew the Angel of Judgment. Again he laid his grasp upon my front. Again I felt it like the weight of a thunderbolt. I bounded in agony from the plain, fell at his feet, and the sky, the earth, and the avenger disappeared from my eyes.

"'When life returned to me again, I found that I was rushing forward with vast speed, but it was no longer the bound and spring of my sinewy limbs. I felt, too, that I was no longer treading the sands that had so long burned under my feet. I was tossed by winds; I was drenched with heavy moisture; I saw at intervals a strong glare of light bursting on me, and then suddenly obscured. My senses gradually cleared, and I became conscious that my being had undergone a new change. I glanced at my limbs, and saw them covered with plumage; but the talons were still there. I still felt the fierce eagerness for blood, the instinctive desire of destroying life, the eagerness of pursuit, the savage spirit of loneliness. Still I was the sullen king of the forest; in every impulse of my spirit I

rushed on. As far as my eye could gaze—and it now possessed a power of vision which seemed to give me the command of the earth—I saw clouds rolling in huge piles as white as snow, and wilder than the surges of an uproused sea. I saw the marble pinnacles of mountains piercing through the vapoury ocean like the points of lances; I saw the whole majesty of the kingdom of the air, with all its splendour of colouring, its gathering tempests, its boundless reservoirs of the rain, its fiery forges of the thunder. Still I rushed on, sustained by unconscious power, and filled with a fierce joy in my new strength. As I accidentally passed over a broad expanse of vapour, which lay calm and smooth under the meridian beams, I looked downwards. The speed of my shadow as it swept across the cloud first caught my eye. But I was in another moment struck with still keener astonishment at the shape which fell there. It bore the complete outline of an eagle; I saw the broad wings, the strong form, the beak and head framed for rapine; the destruction of prey was in every movement. The truth flashed on me. My spirit had transmigrated into the king of the feathered race. My first sensations were of the deepest melancholy. I was to be a prisoner once more in the form of an inferior nature. I was still to be exiled from the communion of man. I was, for years or ages, to be a fierce and blood-devouring creature, the dweller among mountains and precipices, pursued by man, a terror to all the beings of its nature, stern, solitary, hated, and miserable. Yet I had glimpses of consolation. Though retaining the ruthless impulses of my forest state, I felt that my lot was now softened, that my fate was cast in a mould of higher capabilities of enjoyment, that I was safer from the incessant fears of pursuit, from the famine, the thirst, the wounds, and the inclem-

ency of the life of the wilderness. I felt still a higher alleviation of my destiny in the sense that the very enjoyments, few and lonely as they were, which were added to my existence, were proof that my captivity was not to be for ever. The recollections of my human career still mingled with the keen and brute impulses of my present being; but they were no longer the scorpion scourges that had once tortured me. I remembered with what eager longing I had often looked upon the clear heavens of Egypt, and envied every bird that I saw soaring in the sunshine. I remembered how often, in even the most successful hours of my ambition, I had wished to exchange existence with the ibis that I had seen sporting over the banks of the Nile, and then spreading his speckled wings, and floating onward to the Thebais, at a height inaccessible to the arrow. How often had I gazed at the eagles which I started at the head of my hunting train from the country of the Cataracts, and while I watched their flight into the highest region of the blue and lovely atmosphere, saw their plumage turned to gold and purple as they rose through the coloured light of the clouds, or poised themselves in the full radiance of the sunbeams! This delight was now fully within my possession, and I enjoyed it to the full. The mere faculty of motion is an indulgence; but to possess it without restraint—to have unlimited space before me for its exercise, and to traverse it without an exertion—to be able to speed with a swiftness surpassing all human rapidity—to speed through a world, and to speed with the simple wave of a wing—was a new sense, a source of pleasure that alone might almost have soothed my calamity. The beauty of nature, the grandeur of the elemental changes, the contrasted majesty of the mountains with the living and crowded luxuriance of the plains below, were perpetually

before my eye; and tardily as they impressed themselves on my spirit, and often as they were degraded and darkened by the necessities of my animal nature, they still made their impression. My better mind was beginning to revive. At length, one day as I lay on my poised pinions, basking in the sun, and wondering at the flood of radiance that from his orb illumined earth and heaven, I lamented, with almost the keenness of human regret, that I was destitute of the organs to make known to man the magnificence of the powers of creation, thus seen nigh, cloudless, and serene. In this contemplation I had forgotten that a tempest had been gathering in the horizon. It had rapidly advanced towards me. It enwrapped me before I had time to spread my pinions and escape from its overwhelming ruin. When I made the attempt, it was too late. I saw nothing before, below, or above me, but rolling volumes of vapour, which confused my vision and clogged my wings. Lightning began to shoot through the depths of the world of cloud. As I still struggled fiercely to extricate myself, I saw a shape standing in the heart of the storm. I knew the countenance. It was Azrael; still awful, but with its earlier indignation gone. My strength sank and withered before him. My powerful pinion flagged. I waited the blow. It was mercy. I saw him stretch forth the fatal hand again. The lightning burst around me. I was enveloped in a whirlwind of fire, felt one wild pang, and felt no more.

"'I awoke in the midst of a chamber filled with a crowd of wild-looking men and women, who, on seeing me open my eyes, could not suppress their wonder and joy. They danced about the chamber with all the gesticulations of barbarian delight. As I gazed round, with some hope or fear of seeing the mighty angel who had smote me, my

gesture was mistaken for a desire to breathe the open air. I was carried towards a large casement, from which a view of the country spread before me. I was instantly, and for the first time, now sensible that another change had come upon me. Where were the vast volumes of clouds, on which I had floated in such supreme command? Where were the glittering pinnacles of the mountains, on which I had for so many years looked down from a height that made them dwindle into spear-heads and arrow-points? Where was that broad and golden splendour of the sun, on which I had for so many thousand days gazed, as if I drank new life from the lustre? I now saw before me only a deep and gloomy ravine, feathered with pines, and filled with a torrent that bounded from the marble summit of the precipice. The tops of the hills seemed to pierce the heavens, but they were a sheet of sullen forest; the sun was shut out, and, but for a golden line that touched the ridge, I should have forgotten that he had an existence. I had left the region of lights and glories; I was now a wingless, powerless, earth-fixed thing, a helpless exile from the azure provinces of the sky. What I had become, I toiled in vain to discover. I was changed; I knew no more; my faculties still retained the impressions made on them by long habit; and I felt myself involuntarily attempting to spring forward, and launch again upon the bosom of the air. But I was at length to be fully acquainted with the truth.

"'As the evening came on, I heard signals of horns and wild cries; the sounds of many voices roused me, and, soon after, the women whom I had seen before, rushed into the chamber, bringing a variety of ornaments and robes, which they put on me. A mirror, which one of them held to my face when all was completed, showed me that I had

transmigrated into the form of a young female. I was now the daughter of a Circassian chieftain. The being whose form I now possessed had been memorable for her beauty, was accordingly looked upon as a treasure by her parents, and destined to be sold to the most extravagant purchaser. But envy exists even in the mountains of Circassia; and a dose of opium, administered by a rival beauty, had suddenly extinguished a bargain, which had been already far advanced, with an envoy from the royal harem of Persia. My parents were inconsolable, and they had torn their garments, and vowed revenge over me for three days. On this evening the horsemen of the whole tribe were to have assembled for an incursion upon the tribe of my successful rival, and to have avenged my death by general extermination. While all was in suspense, the light had come into the eyes of the dead beauty, the colour had dawned on her cheeks, her lips had moved; and her parents, in exultation at the hope of renewing their bargain, had at once given a general feast to their kinsmen, loaded me with their family ornaments, and invited the Persian to renew his purchase, and carry me without delay beyond the chance of future doses of opium.

" 'The Persian came in full gallop, and approved of me for the possession of his long-bearded lord. My parents embraced me, wept over me, protested that I was the light of their eyes, and sold me without the slightest ceremony. That night I was packed up like a bale of Curdistan cloth, was flung on a horse, and carried far from the mountains of Circassia.

" 'At the Persian Court I lived sumptuously, and in perpetual terror. I ate off dishes of gold, and slept on beds fringed with pearl, yet I envied the slave who swept the chamber. Everything around me was distrust, discon-

tent, and treachery. My Persian lord was devoted to me for a month; and, at the end of that time, I learned from an old female slave that I was to be poisoned, as my place was to be supplied by a new favourite, and it was contrary to the dignity of the court that I should be sold to a subject. My old friend further told me that the poison was to be administered in a pomegranate that night at supper, and mentioned by what mark I was to know the fatal fruit. On that night there was a banquet in the harem; the monarch was beyond all custom courteous, and he repeatedly invited me to drink perfumed liquors, as the highest token of his regard, from his own table. At length, in a sportive tone, he ordered a dish of pomegranates from his favourite garden to be divided amongst the fairest of the fair of the harem. My heart sank within me, as I heard the sentence of death. But I became only the more vigilant. The dish was brought. The fruits were flung by the monarch to his delighted guests, till at last but two remained. One of them, I saw, was the marked one. To have refused it, would have argued detection of the treachery, and must have been followed by certain death. At the moment when his hand touched it, I exclaimed that a scorpion had stung me, and fell on the floor in agony! This produced a momentary confusion. The monarch dropped the fruit from his hand, and turned to summon assistance. Quick as the love of life could urge me, I darted towards the table, and changed the places of the two pomegranates. The confusion soon subsided, and I received from the hand of the Sofi the one which was now next to his royal touch. I bowed to the ground in gratitude, and tasted the fruit, which I praised as the most exquisite of all productions of the earth. The monarch, satisfied with his performance, now put the remaining one to his lips. I saw the royal epicure devour

it to the last morsel, and observed the process without the least compunction; he enjoyed it prodigiously. In the consciousness that he would not enjoy it long, I packed up every jewel and coin I could gather in my chamber the moment I left the banquet, desiring the old slave to bring me the earliest intelligence of the catastrophe. My labours were scarcely completed, when an uproar in the palace told me that my pomegranate was effectual. The old slave came flying in immediately after, saying that all the physicians of the city had been ordered to come to the Sofi's chamber; that he was in agony, and that there were "strong suspicions of his having been poisoned!" The old Nubian laughed excessively as she communicated her intelligence, and, at the same time, recommended my taking advantage of the tumult to escape. I lost no time, and we fled together.

"'But, as I passed the windows of the royal chamber, I could not resist the impulse to see how his supper succeeded with him. Climbing on my old companion's shoulders I looked in. He was surrounded by a crowd of physicians of all ranks and races, Jews and infidels, all offering their nostrums; and all answered by the most furious threats, that unless they recovered him before the night was over, the dawn should see every one of them without his head. He then raved at his own blunder, which he appeared to have found out in all points, and cursed the hour when he ate pomegranates for supper, and was outwitted by a woman. He then rolled in agony. I left him yelling, and heard him long after I had reached the boundaries of the harem garden. He died before he had time to cut off the physicians' heads. Before dawn he was with his forefathers.

"'Through what changes of life I now ran, I remember

but little more. All is confused before my eyes, I became the captive of a Bedouin, fed his camels, moved the jealousy of the daughter of a neighbouring robber, was carried off by his wild riders in consequence, and left to perish in the heart of the Hedjaz. From this horrible fate I was rescued, after days of wandering and famine, by a caravan which had lost its way, and, straying out of the right road, came to make prize of me. The conductor of the escort seized me as his property, fed me until I was in due fulness for the slave-market at Astrachan, and sold me to a travelling Indian dealer in Angora goats' hair and women. I was hurried to the borders of the Ganges, and consigned to the court of a mighty sovereign, black as ebony, and with the strongest resemblance to an overgrown baboon. I was next the sultana of a Rajahpoot. I was then the water-carrier of a Turcoman horse-stealer; I was the slave of a Roman matron at Constantinople, who famished and flogged me to make me a convert, and, when I at last owned the conversion, famished and flogged me to keep me to my duty. She died, and I was free from the scourge, the temple, and the dungeon. I have but one confession more to make. Can the ear of the holy son of Jehoshaphat, the wisest of the wise, listen to the compacts of the tempter?' The fair speaker paused; the Rabbi shrank at the words. But the dying penitent before him was no longer an object of either temptation or terror. He pressed his hands upon his bosom, bowed his head, and listened.

"The fainting beauty smiled, and, taking from her locks a rich jewel, placed it on the hand of her hearer. 'My story is at an end,' said she. 'I had but one trial yet to undergo. The King of the Spirits of Evil urged me to deliver myself over to him. He promised me instant

liberty, the breaking of my earthly chain, the elevation into the highest rank of earth, the enjoyment of riches beyond the treasures of kings. The temptation was powerful; the wealth which you now see round me was brought by hands that might have controlled the elements; but I had learned to resist all that dazzled the eye. Ambition was not for my sex, yet I might have at this hour ranked at the head of the race of woman; a spell was within my power, by the simple uttering of which I might have sat on a throne, the noblest throne at this hour upon earth. This, too, I resisted. But the more overwhelming temptation was at hand: The King of Evil stood before me in a garb of splendour inexpressible, and offered to make me the possessor of all the secrets of magic. He raised upon the earth visions of the most bewitching beauty; he filled these halls with shapes of the most dazzling brightness; he touched my eyes, and I saw the secrets of other worlds, the people of the stars, the grandeur of the mighty regions that spread above this cloudy dwelling and prison of man. The temptation was beyond all resistance. I was on the point of yielding, when I saw the Spirit of Evil suddenly writhe as if an arrow had shot through him. His brightness instantly grew dim, his strength withered, and, even while I gazed, he sank into the earth. Where he had stood, I saw nothing but a footprint, marked as if the soil had borne fire; but another form arose. I knew Azrael; his countenance had now lost all its terrors. He told me that my trials were come to their conclusion; that, guilty as I was, my last allegiance to the tempter was broken; that the decree had gone forth for my release, and that this night I was to inhabit a form of clay no more.' The Rabbi listened in holy fear to the language of the wearied spirit, and for a while was absorbed in supplication. He

then repeated the prayers for the dying hours of the daughters of Israel.

" ' It was for this that I summoned you, son of Jehoshaphat,' said the sinking form. ' It was to soothe my last hour on earth with the sounds of holy things, and to fill my dying ear with the wisdom of our fathers. So shall my chain be gently divided, and the hand of the angel of death lead me through the valley of darkness without treading on the thorns of pain.' The Rabbi knelt, and prayed more fervently. But he was roused by the deep sigh of the sufferer. ' Now, pray for me no longer,' were her words ; ' pray for the peace of Jerusalem.' The Rabbi prayed for the restoration of Zion. As his prayer arose, he heard it echoed by voices of sweetness that sank into his soul. He looked upon the couch ; the sufferer was dead ; but the struggle of death had not disturbed a feature. She lay still lovely, and he knew that the fetter of the spirit had been loosed for ever, and that the trial had been ended in mercy. He rose to call the attendants to watch by the dead, but the halls were empty. He then turned to the porch, and, pondering on the ways of destiny, set his face in awe and sorrow towards his own home. He looked back once more, but where was the porch through which he had so lately passed ? Where was the stately mansion itself ? All before the eye was the dim and yellow expanse of weeds that covers the foot of Hebron. He looked around him—he saw but the heathy sides of the hill, with the city on its brow ; he looked below him—he saw but the endless range of fertile plain that is lost in the desert ; above him, all was the blue glory of midnight. The palace was air. Had he been in a trance ? Had he seen a vision ? Had a warning been given to him in a dream ? Who knoweth ? But is it not recorded in the book of the house

of Jehoshaphat; who shall tell? Go, thou who readest, and learn wisdom. Are not all things dust and air?"

Some of the traditions allow a much more extensive transmigration. The treatise *Zohar* claims the privilege, or admits the punishment, for it may be either, of transmigrating no less than a thousand times; on these grounds: When the great Judge causes the soul of a man to transmigrate, it is generally because it has not prospered or done good in its former state. It is then that the soul is torn from one existence and planted in the form of another; and this is called the "changing of the place." On the third change it receives a new appellative, and this is called the "changing of the name." A more marked stage is the alteration to a new form, with a consequent alteration of all the objects, pursuits, and faculties; this is called the "changing of the work." But "how often," asks the treatise, "may those changes take place? To one thousand times," is the answer.

But this singular doctrine is urged still further, and is made to comprehend even the fallen angels. The treatise *Tuf Haraez* declares that, as it is not the will of Providence that any Jew should be lost, and the command of circumcision was given to Abraham, the resource of transmigration was devised for the assistance of those who might neglect that essential rite; as thus, instead of being utterly cast forth, they were to be only temporarily separated from the chosen people, being sent to transmigrate through a series of bodies, until their due purification should be accomplished. Upon the discovery of this proviso, the treatise tells us that the fallen angels, conceiving themselves not much worse than an uncircumcised Jew, laid their claim to a similar privilege. Sammael and his seventy princes pleaded their cause, on the ground that as they were the work of creation

not less than the sons of Abraham, they, fallen as they might be, deserved the same consideration. "For, what had Abraham done that he should be preferred to beings originally so much his superiors?" The answer was, that the patriarch's merits had entitled him to this privilege; "that he had gone into the fire of the Chaldeans," to prove his zeal, which was more than Sammael and his seventy princes had ever thought of doing. The application was closed by a summary command that it should not be repeated. "Ye have not hallowed my words; therefore speak no more, good or bad."

When we read those perversions of Scripture, which seem to be engendered of the most wilful ignorance, and the blindest infatuation, we may well account for the earnestness with which the apostolical writers warned the Christian world against the traditionary spirit of the Jews, against the "old wives' fables," the entangled genealogies, and the endless mysticism. We have here specimens of the wisdom of the proud and stubborn generation which rejected the Messiah, and, with the oracles of divine truth in their hands, actually loved the false, the extravagant, and the trifling. We may well understand the force of the caution against "will worship," and prying into things of which no knowledge has been vouchsafed to man—the nature of angels, and the transactions of Heaven. We see here the fantastic humility, the uncalled-for mortification, the unauthorized homage to the living saints or the dead. It is not less palpable that the propensity to load scriptural truth with human inventions has been the characteristic of the corruption of Christianity, not less than of Judaism; and that Rome may vie, at this hour, in legendary extravagance, the worshipping of angels, the prayers for those spirits who are beyond all human intervention, the homage

to the saints and martyrs, the useless and frivolous miracles, and the misty, fluctuating, and irreverent doctrines suggested for their support, with the wildest and most worthless fabrications of the Rabbins.

Like all Oriental writings on theology, the Rabbinical traditions discuss largely the glories, wonders, and delights of the future state. The Sacred Scriptures, written for higher purposes than curiosity, or the indulgence of an extravagant imagination, are nearly silent on the subject, probably from the double reason, that sufficient grounds are laid down for virtue without this detail of its rewards, and that human faculties are still but feebly fitted to comprehend the development, were it made. Yet even they are not without indications of the peculiar species of happiness reserved for the immortal spirit. They give us statements of the temper in which Paradise will be enjoyed, the combination of love, gratitude, adoration, ardour of spirit, and activity of powers, which will constitute the purified nature; and which, if it existed on earth, would make earth itself, with all its inclemencies of nature, and anxieties of circumstance, almost a Paradise. And, in those declarations, they exhibit the same wisdom, and the same sublime simplicity, which characterize the visible operations of Providence; for they give us the principle of happiness, without embarrassing us with the details. They give us an incitement to the vigorous performance of our human duty, by suggesting a magnificent and various future, yet of which neither the magnificence is suffered to dazzle, nor the variety to distract, the mind.

But the famous treatise *Nismath Chajim* settles all questions at once, according to the wisdom of the sons of Solomon. After announcing that there are seven regions, or dwellings, in the place of evil, for the punishment of the

wicked, it cheers the true believer by telling him that Paradise is similarly partitioned, and equally large. The discovery is made in the form of a commission, directed by the Rabbi Gamaliel to the Rabbi Jehoscha ben Levi, a renowned name in the legendary world, for the purpose of deciding whether any of the *Gojim* (Gentiles, or Infidels) are in Paradise, and whether any of the children of Israel are in hell. The angel of death bears the commission to the Rabbi, and the Rabbi sets out immediately on his inquisition. The result of his investigation is, that Paradise contains seven houses, or general receptacles for the blissful. Those houses are unquestionably adapted for a large population; for each house is twelve times ten thousand miles long, and twelve times ten thousand miles broad, or one hundred and twenty thousand miles square. He then proceeds to report on their distinctions.

The first house fronts the first gate of Paradise, and is inhabited by converts from the Infidels, who have voluntarily embraced the Jewish faith. The walls are of glass, and the timbers cedar. He proposed to give accuracy to his statement by actually measuring the extent. But the converts, probably jealous of his superior sanctity, and conceiving that he was about to eject them, began to offer opposition. Fortunately, Obadiah the prophet, their superintendent saint, happening to be on the spot, he remonstrated with them, and the measurement was suffered to go on in peace. The second house fronts the second gate of Paradise. Its walls are of silver, and its beams cedar. It is inhabited by those who have repented, and they are superintended by a penitent: Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, is set over them. The third house is opposite to the third gate, is built of silver and gold, and is inhabited by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with all the Israelites who came

out of Egypt, and all that were in the desert. In this house, also, dwell David, Solomon, and all the other sons of David, with the exception of Absalom. But those do not comprehend the whole habitancy of this well-stocked house. It contains, in addition, the whole succession of the kings of Judah, with the exception of Manasseh, who, as we have already seen, is occupied in governing the second house. At the head of this dwelling are Moses and Aaron. The Rabbi now, observing that this household possessed a great quantity of handsome furniture, gold and silver plate, &c., and that the chambers were provided with beds, couches, and candlesticks of pearls and diamonds, asked David the purport of this opulence. "These," said David, "are for the children of the world from whom you came." The Rabbi then inquired whether any of the Gentiles, or of the children of Esau, were there. "None," was the answer. "Whatever good they may do, is rewarded in the world; but their natural destiny is hell." But every one who is wicked among the children of Israel is punished in his life-time, but obtains the life to come; as it is written,—"He repayeth those that hate him."

The fourth house fronts the fourth gate of Paradise, and is built, as the first man was framed, in perfection. It is built with oil-tree (olive) wood. But why is it thus built? Because the house is built for the habitation of the perfectly righteous, and their earthly days were bitter, like the oil-tree. The fifth house is built of silver, fine gold, glass, and crystal. The river Gihon flows through the midst of it. The framework is of gold and silver, with an odour far exceeding that of Lebanon wood. The couches are also more costly than those of the others; being formed of gold, silver, spice, and scarlet and blue silk, which was woven by Eve; and also crimson silk, and the finest linen, and

cloth of goats' hair, which was woven by angels. In this house dwell Messiah Ben David, and Elias of blessed memory; and to the chamber with pillars of silver, and carpets of scarlet, where Messiah especially dwells, with Elias perpetually declaring to him, "Be at ease; for the end is at hand, when thou art to redeem Israel," Moses, Aaron, David, and Solomon, with the kings of Israel, and of the house of David, come on the second and fifth day of every week, and also on every Sabbath and festival, to lament with him, and comfort him, saying, "Be at ease, rely on Heaven, for the end is at hand."

But the fourth day of the week is reserved for a different assemblage. On this day, Korah and his company, with Dathan and Abiram, come to him, and ask, "When will be the end of what is wonderful; and when shall we be raised from death, and suffered to come out of the abyss of the earth? And duly they hear the same scornful answer, "Go to your fathers and ask them." This answer is decisive: they are overwhelmed with shame, shrink, and disappear. Two houses remain; but description has been exhausted, and they seem to be yet either inadequately finished, or inadequately filled. The sixth is for those who have rigidly walked in the path of the commandments; the seventh for those who died, whether of sorrow for the national sins, or innocent and undue victims, swept away in the times of national calamity.

But among the possessors of Paradise, independently of the great historic characters of the race of Israel, there are ranks, differing in dignity according to their merits, or the circumstances of their lives or deaths. The first order consists of those who suffered death for the honour of their law and nation, by the hands of Infidel governments; such as the Rabbi Akkiba and his disciples, who were put to death

by the Roman authorities. The second order consists of those who have been drowned at sea. The third, of the famous Rabbi Ben Saccai and his disciples; the fourth, of those on whom the Shekinah, or glory, has descended; the fifth, of true penitents, who rank with the perfectly righteous; the sixth, of those who have never married, yet have lived a life of purity; the seventh, of those in humble life, who have constantly exercised themselves in the Bible, and the study of the Mishna, and have had an honest vocation. For each order there is a distinct abode. The highest order is that of the martyrs for the Law, the order of Akkiba and his disciples.

The decorations assigned to those fortunate classes are various; yet as even the Rabbinical imagination can invent nothing finer than gold and jewels, the diversity is not marked with sufficient distinctness to gratify European taste. All, however, is in the true Oriental profusion. Rabbi Jehoscha, still the great authority for supramundane affairs, relates, according to the *Jalkut Schimoni*, "That at the two ruby gates of Paradise, stand sixty times ten thousand spirits ministering, and that the countenance of each of them shines like the brightness of the firmament. On the arrival of one of the righteous from Earth, those spirits surround him, receive him with due honours, strip him of his grave-clothes, and robe him in no less than eight garments of clouds of glory. They next put upon his head two crowns, one of pearls and diamonds, and the other of pure gold, and put eight myrrh branches into his hands. They then sing a chorus of praise round him, and bid him go and eat his bread in joy! They next lead him to springs of water, margined with eight hundred species of roses and myrrh, where to each of the righteous is assigned a separate canopy from the heat, or the splendour, or both.

From the springs flow four rivers, of milk, wine, balsam, and honey. The canopies are crowned and lighted by pearls, each of which gives a light equal to that of the planet Venus. Under every canopy is laid a table of pearls and precious stones. And over the head of each hover a group of angels, who say to him, "Go now, and eat honey with joy, because thou hast studied the Law, and exercised thyself therein; and go and drink the wine which is preserved from the six days of the creation."

Among the righteous, the least handsome are like Joseph and Rabbi Jochanan (who was celebrated for his beauty). No night comes there; and there also the process of beauty and beatification is a matter of a few hours. In the time of the first watch, the righteous becomes an infant of Paradise, passes into the place where the spirits of infants are, and feels all the joyousness belonging to infancy. In the second watch, he starts into Paradisiac youth, passes into the dwelling of the youthful spirits, and enjoys their pursuits and pastimes. In the third watch, he enters into the state of Paradisiac manhood; his perfection is complete, and he is thenceforth master of all the faculties and enjoyments of the region of happiness.

Paradise, too, retains its old supremacy over all gardens, from its abundance of trees, of which the Rabbins give it no less than eighty times ten thousand species in each of the quarters of this famous spot of celestial horticulture. Angels in abundance are also provided, either to cultivate or to admire them; for there are six hundred thousand in each quarter, floating about, or guarding the fruit. The tree of life stands there, with its branches covering the whole extent of Paradise, and with fruits suitable to all the various tastes of the righteous, for they have five hundred thousand several flavours. Seven clouds of glory sit above

it, and at every wind which shakes it the fragrance passes from one end of the world to the other. The disciples of the sages are peculiarly favoured, for they have their especial seats allotted under this tree. Their merit is to have profoundly studied and eloquently explained the Law.

A large portion of the Rabbinical writings is filled with those descriptions of lavish and fanciful beauty, but deformed with extravagancies, which offend even against the wildness of Eastern fiction. The light which supplies the place of sun to the righteous occupies a large space in the description. The treatise *Avodath Hakkadesh*, after saying that the extent of the garden is immense, states that there stands in the centre a vast laver, filled with dew from the highest celestial region; and in its centre stands a light incapable of being eclipsed or obscured, it being of the nature of that which was originally given for the use of Adam, and by which he was enabled to see at a glance from one end of the world to the other. But the ground in the neighbourhood of this prodigious luminary conduces partially to this result, as it is an entire pavement of precious stones, each of which gives a light brilliant as that of a burning torch; the whole forming an illumination of indescribable lustre.

It is obvious that, in their inventions, the Traditionists had no reluctance to borrow from the written letter. They seize just enough of the facts of Scripture to form a framework for the fiction, and over this they flourish their rambling and legendary conceptions. But, as they borrow largely, so they have been prodigally borrowed from. The Romish doctrines of supererogation, purgatory, and individual intercession, are not the work of Rome alone; they are as old as the Rabbins; and the only merit which the Romish adopters can claim is that of having turned a play of imagination into a principle of practice, made a rambling tenet

a profitable dogma, and fabricated dreams and visions into a source of the deepest corruption that ever violated the simplicity of religion, revolted human reason, and stained the feeble purity of the human heart. In the *Nismath Chajim* we are told that the Rabbi Akkiba, their great doctor, one day, as he was going to be present at the burial of one of his disciples, was surprised at the sight of a being with the shape of a man, running with an enormous pile of wood on his shoulders—yet running with the speed of a horse. The compassionate Rabbi stopped his celerity, and, perceiving that he was human, asked him why he was condemned to this singular labour, adding, "that he pitied him so much, that if he were a slave, and his master would be content to sell him, he himself would be the purchaser, in order to free him from this severity of toil; or, if his poverty were the cause, that he would give him some opportunity of obtaining wealth." The man listened, but with wild impatience; he struggled to break away, but, awed by the power of the great Akkiba, he could not move from the spot. At length he burst into a passionate cry, imploring that he might be suffered to go on, and fly over the world, bearing his melancholy burden. The Rabbi was astonished, but he now began to perceive that he was conversing with a being not of this world, and sternly demanded, "Art thou man or devil?" The unfortunate being in agony exclaimed, "I have passed away from earth, and now my eternal portion is to carry fuel to the *Great Fire*." The startled Rabbi asked what act of his life could have plunged him into this dreadful calamity. The criminal answered that he had been a collector of the public taxes, and had abused his office by favouring the rich and oppressing the poor. The next question was whether he had ever heard, in his place of punishment, that there was any remedy for his guilt? The

condemned now began to be impatient, through fear of increasing his punishment by delaying his task, and eagerly implored the Rabbi to let him go. At length, acknowledging that he had heard of one redemption—namely, that if he had a son, who could stand forth in the congregation, and there say the prayer of the Synagogue, beginning with 'Blessed be the blessed Lord"—he might be delivered from his sentence. On his being asked, whether he had a son, he answered that he did not know; that he had left his widow when she was about to have a child, but that he now could not know whether it was a son or a daughter; or, if a son, whether he was sufficiently instructed in the Law. To the further inquiry, where his family were to be found, he answered that his own name was Akkiba, his wife's Susmira, and his city Alduca. The man was now suffered to recommence his fearful race again. And the benevolent Rabbi began a pilgrimage from city to city until he found the due place. There he inquired for the dwelling of the husband. But he seems to have been unpopular among his countrymen, for the general answer to the Rabbi was, "May his bones be bruised in hell." The perplexed inquirer now attempted to ascertain the fate of the widow; but she appeared to be scarcely more fortunate than her husband, for the reply was, "Let her name be rooted out of the world." His sole resource now was the son; and of him the answer was not much more favourable: "He was not circumcised, his parents having had no regard to the Covenant."

But the Rabbi was not to be repelled; he discovered the boy at last, took him to his home, found him a preternatural dunce, into whom the Law could not by possibility make way; and was driven to a fast of forty days, which by divine aid at length accomplished the task of teaching

him the alphabet. After this his education advanced to the extent of reading the prayer *Shema.* (Deut. vi. 4.) The Rabbi now brought forward his pupil, the prayer of spiritual liberation was recited, and in that hour the father was freed from his task. He soon after appeared to the Rabbi in a dream, saying, "May the rest of Paradise be thy portion, because thou hast rescued me from the punishment of hell." Then the Rabbi burst out into rejoicings, and repeated a holy hymn in honour of the achievement.

The only distinction between this pious performance and the exploits of later times is in the penance. If the Rabbi Akkiba had done his purgatorial work at Rome instead of at Jerusalem, he would have made others fast instead of mortifying himself, and he would have put a handsome sum into his purse for masses and indulgences, instead of encumbering himself with hospitality to the tardy subject of circumcision.

Some of those stories are publicly founded on the facts of the Jewish persecutions, though the historian who would take them, in their present state, for authority, would tread upon slippery ground. The treatise *Sanhedrin* gives the following account of the origin of the celebrated book *Zohar* :—

The Rabbis Jehuda, Isaac, and Shimeon, were conversing, when Jehuda ben Gerim, a convert, came to them. On Jehuda's observing that the Romans excelled in buildings and public works, that they had erected markets, bridges, and baths, the Rabbi Shimeon contested their merit, by saying that they had done those things with selfish or corrupt objects. The convert was clearly unworthy of hearing so much wisdom, for he carried the conversation to the imperial ear, and sentence soon followed, that the Rabbi who had spoken contemptuously of the reigning power should be

slain, and the Rabbi who had kept silence should be banished, while the laudatory Rabbi should be promoted. On this announcement the Rabbi Shimeon, the chief culprit, fled with his son, and they hid themselves in the school, his wife bringing them bread and water every day. But the pursuit becoming close, and Shimeon observing to his son, with more truth than gallantry, that women were somewhat light-minded, and that the Romans might tease his wife into discovering the place of their retreat, he determined to put this casualty out of her power by hiding in a cave. There they must, however, have met with a fate as evil as the Roman sword; for they were on the point of famine, when a fruit-tree and a spring were created for their support. Here, whether for comfort, concealment, or saving their clothes, they undressed themselves, sat up to the neck in sand, and spent the day in study. At the time of prayer, however, they recollected the decorums of their law, dressed themselves, performed their service, and then laid aside their clothing once more. At the end of twelve years of this life of nakedness and learning, the prophet Elias stood at the entrance of the cave, and cried aloud, "Who will tell the son of Jochai that the emperor is dead, and his decree is come to an end?" Then went out the Rabbi Shimeon and his son. But their studies had rendered them unfit for the easy morality of the world into which they were re-entering. They saw mankind as busy as ever with their worldly affairs, ploughing and trading, pursuing wealth, passion, and pleasure. They instantly exclaimed, "Behold a race of evil! behold a people who neglect eternal things!" Their words were fearful, but their effect was more fearful still, for whatever they denounced, or whatever object fell beneath their indignant glance, was instantly consumed with flame. But this discipline would

have thinned mankind too rapidly to be suffered long. A voice came forth from the clouds, "Are ye come out only to destroy the world? Return to your cave." The hermits were not disobedient to the high admonition. They returned to their solitude, and there abode a whole year. At the end of that period the Rabbi Shimeon lifted up his voice, and said, "Even in hell the wicked are punished but twelve months." This remonstrance was graciously listened to. The voice was heard again, commanding that they should come forth from the cave. They now came forth, restraining their wrath at the incorrigible worldliness of man, and shutting those fiery eyes whose glances consumed all they fell upon, like flashes of lightning. They suffered the world to take its own way, they took theirs; and thenceforth lived in popularity, ate their bread in peace, and escaped the turbulent life and thankless death of those who trouble themselves with the morals of their neighbours. But their sojourn in the cave was not unproductive; for their wise heads and industrious fingers produced the famous treatise, *Zohar*.

With those conceptions of the power of man and angels, it may be presumed that the Rabbins have not neglected the space offered to the imagination in the kingdom of darkness. There they arrange, distribute, and define all kinds of faculties, pursuits, and punishments, in the most exuberant and sometimes in the most striking style. Their legends exhibit all the characteristics of the oriental school, and are alternately feeble and forcible, absurd and interesting, trivial and sublime. One portion of the spirits of evil they conceive to possess a kind of middle state between the worlds of nature and spirit. They are declared to resemble angels in three things—the power of flight, foresight, and passing from one part of the earth to the other with instant and

angelic speed. To the humbler race of man they are linked also by three things—by feeling the necessity of food, by being increased according to human generation, and by being liable to death. Those evil spirits know no Salic law, for they have no less than four queens, named the *Lilis*, the *Naama*, the *Igerith*, and the *Machalath;* each of these formidable sovereigns waving the sceptre over bands of unclean spirits utterly beyond calculation. They are severally paramount, each presiding over a fourth of the year, but in this period reigning over nature only from the hour of sunset till midnight. Once in the year they assemble with their dark legions on the heights of Nishpa, in the centre of the mountains of the equator. But over them all Solomon had power. These four are, however, the wives of one, the Prince *Sammael*, who reigns over *Esau;* to whom the Rabbins have a peculiar aversion, which they display on all occasions. The four queens are among the inconveniences which beset the daily life of the Jew. The Christian peasantry of Europe have their unlucky day, Friday; and the Moslems are not without their day of casualty. But the Jew must be a dexterous steersman, who can make his way through any of the seven days of the week without running foul of misfortune regularly laid down in the calendar. The Rabbinical caution especially lies against venturing out alone in the nights of Thursdays or the Sabbaths, for on those nights the Igerith is especially abroad with an army of no less than 180,000 evil spirits, ready to pluck the truest of believers from the face of the earth at the instant of his putting his foot beyond the threshold.

But the *Lilith*, or *Lilis*, is the lady of romance. When Adam was first formed, Lilis was his wife. She was made of earth, but her earthly compound was ill suited to the perfection of the first father of mankind. She contested

his right of being master of his own house, and then began that quarrel which has been so often renewed since the beginning of the world. Lilis would not recede; Adam would not concede; and the result was, as in later times, a demand for a separate maintenance. Lilis pronounced the *Shem Hamphorash;* wings started from her shoulders at the words, and she darted upward from the presence of her astonished lord, to range the kingdoms of the air. Adam appealed to authority; and three angels, *Sensi*, *Sansenoi*, and *Sammangelof*, were sent in full wing after her. A decree was issued, that if she came back voluntarily all should be forgiven; but if she refused to come, one hundred of her children should die every day! But Lilis had already felt the charms of freedom, and she resolved to enjoy them to her utmost. The three angels supplicated in vain. She waved her plumage across the earth; they pursued. She fled across the farthest waters of the ocean. There, at length, she was overtaken. She still refused. The angels threatened to strip her of her wings, to plunge her in the waters which rolled beneath them, and bind her in chains at the bottom of the sea for ever. Still Lilis was inflexible, and she even awed them with the declaration, that she had been created with the especial power to destroy children, the males from the day of their birth to the eighth day (the day of circumcision), but the females until the tenth day. This menace rendered it only the more indispensable that this formidable truant should be brought back to her allegiance. They now proceeded to exert their powerful means: when Lilis offered a compromise, that whenever she saw any of the names or pictures of the angels on a *Kamea* (a slip of parchment hung round a child's neck), she would spare the child. The subsequent offspring of Lilis were evil spirits, of whom a hundred die daily, but

unfortunately the produce is more rapid than the extinction. But the Doctors of the Law acknowledge the value of the agreement, and therefore write the names of the angels upon all children's necks, that Lilis may be equally true to the compact, and spare the rising generation of Israel.

Solomon, the perpetual theme of oriental story, of course flourishes in the annals of those inexhaustible dealers in prodigies. One of the Chaldee Paraphrases tells us of a feast which Solomon, the son of David, the wise and holy, gave in the days of his glory, and to which he invited all the kings of the earth, from east to west. He regaled his guests with more than royal magnificence; and in the course of the banquet, when his heart was high with wine, showed them the wonders of his power. He first ordered the troops of minstrels trained by his father to enter and exhibit their skill on the harp, cymbal, trumpet, and other instruments. Nothing could be more exquisite. All were astonished and delighted. But he had a more striking display in reserve. At the waving of his sceptre, and the uttering of a command to all the creatures of the earth to attend, the halls of the immense palace were instantly crowded with a concourse of all the kinds of animals, from the lion to the serpent, and from the eagle to the smallest of the birds. The terror of his kingly guests was at first excessive, but it was changed to wonder by seeing the whole crowd of animals acknowledging the power of the man of wisdom; uttering voices to him, all which he understood and answered, and displaying all their qualities and beauties in homage to the mighty monarch. But a still more astounding spectacle was to follow. The king, ordering a small cup of a single chrysolite to be brought to him, poured into it a liquid of a dazzling brightness, till the whole cup glowed like a star; and a flame ascending from it shot forth a thousand dis-

tinct shafts of fire to all parts of the horizon. In a short time sounds of the most fearful kind were heard in earth and air, and the army of the demons, night-spectres, and evil spirits, submissive to his will, poured into the palace. The numbers on this public occasion may be imagined from their habits of congregating on the most private ones. The Rabbins hold that the whole system of nature is so crowded with them, that a true believer has scarcely room to turn on his heel without treading on the hoofs of some of them. The Rabbi Benjamin says, that if a man is not cautious how he opens his eye, there are some who will be sure to get between the lids. Others assert that they stand round us as thick as the fences of a garden. The treatise *Raf Ham* gives the actual number that molest a Rabbi,—an occupation in which they naturally take a peculiar pleasure. This number amounts to a thousand on his left side, and, by some curious preference of mischief, ten thousand on his right. The treatise *Rabba* proceeds to solve some of the more obvious earthly inconveniences which beset the Israelite by this perverse presence. Thus the thronging and pressing in the synagogue, which produces so much confusion and surprise, when every one seems to perceive that there is room enough for all, is really occasioned by those invisible intruders, who are so fond of hearing the discourses of the Jewish priests, that they fill the synagogue to suffocation. The whole fatigue felt in the service also proceeds from their pressure. Even the tearing and wearing of the clothes of the Israelites—a matter which they seem to feel as a peculiar grievance—proceeds from the restless movement and remorseless rubbing of their viewless associates.

But on this feast day of their mighty master none dared to make experiments on his sufferance. All displayed themselves in their best points of view; and nothing could be

more strange, more wonderful, or more dazzling, than the whole measureless muster of the hosts of the nether world. There followed, in long march, shapes of fire; some flashing beams, keen as lightning; some shedding light, soft as the rainbow; some of colossal stature; some of the smallest dwarfishness; some in the naked and powerful proportions of the antediluvian giant; some of the most delicate and subtle loveliness of form, clothed in silk and gold: some wearing armour, royal robes, coronets studded with stars small as the eye of a mole, yet sparkling with intolerable brilliancy; some on the wing; some in floating chariots of metals unknown on earth, yet exceeding the gossamer in lightness, and gold in splendour; some riding coursers of the most inconceivable strength and stupendous magnitude, tall as the towers of a city, and beside which the elephant would have looked like a fawn; some steering barges, entirely formed of rich jewels, through the air, and sweeping round the pillars and sculptures of the palace with infinite velocity; some on foot, and treading on tissues of silver and scarlet, which continually spread wherever they trode, and threw up living roses at each step; some with countenances marked with the contortions of pain and terror, but some of an exquisite and intense beauty, which at once fixed and overwhelmed the eye. All moved to the sound of an infinite number of instruments, warlike, pastoral, and choral, according to their states and powers, and all formed the most singular and wondrous sight imaginable. Yet, though all the guests confessed that they had never seen the equal of this display, they yet acknowledged that it inspired them with indescribable fear. They felt that they were in an evil presence; and not even the charm of those allurements and temptations which still remain to fallen spirits—not even their wisdom, beauty, and know-

ledge of the secrets of nature, their brilliant intellect and universal skill—could prevent the kings from praying Solomon that he would command his terrible vassals, the tribes of the world of darkness, to depart from the palace. The king, in compassion to their human weakness, complied, and taking up the cup of chrysolite, poured into it a liquor of the colour of ebony. The cup suddenly grew black as night, and a thousand shafts of darkness shot out from it to all parts of the horizon. They pierced through the ranks of the evil spirits like a flight of arrows, and instantly the whole mighty multitude broke up, and scattered in all directions through the air. Their flight was long seen like a fall of fiery meteors; and their yells, as they flew, were heard as far as Babylon.

Wolf, the missionary, who is now rambling through Asia, and rejoicing in the perilous encounter of Rajahs, tigers, angry Israelites, and dagger-bearing Moslems, will probably soon give a new public interest to one of the most popular conceptions that ever fell into oblivion,—the existence of the lost tribes of Israel. The present object of this indefatigable rambler is declaredly to bring to light the retreats of the famous revolters of Jeroboam. What resources for the discovery he may find in his own possession, we must leave to time. But, if he should condescend to take his wisdom from the pages of the Rabbins, he will find them ready and copious in supplying him with the most unhesitating information on every point of possible curiosity. The Rabbi Benjamin, in his work, *Massaoth Shel Rabbi Benjamin*, long since informed the wondering world that "from the city *Raabar*, formerly called *Pombeditha*, on the banks of the Euphrates, it is exactly twenty-one days' journey through the desert of *Saba*, in the direction of *Sincar*, to the frontier of the country called that of the

Rechabites. Their capital is the city of *Tema*, where the Prince *Chanan*, who is also a Rabbi, governs the nation. The city is of large dimensions, and the territory is worthy of the capital. It extends sixteen days' journey between the northern mountains. The people are numerous and warlike, yet they are subject to the Gojim, a Gentile power, which forays to a great distance, in company with some hordes of wild Arabs, who live on their northern boundary. Those Rechabite Jews plough and keep cattle; give the tenth of their possessions to the scribes and sages, who live in the schools, and to the poorer Jews, and especially to those who mourn over Sion; and neither eat flesh nor drink wine, but who perpetually wear black garments, in sign of the sorrows of Jerusalem. The number of the people living in *Tema* and *Tilima* is about one hundred thousand. And thither come, once in the year, Prince *Solomon*, and his brother *Chanan*, of the line of David, with shattered clothing, to fast forty days, and pray for the miseries of those Jews who are in exile.

"In the country of the prince, who thus comes periodically to fast with the Rechabites, the people seem to be tolerably prosperous. He has fifty cities, two hundred villages, and a hundred fortresses. His capital is *Thenai*, remarkably strong, and fifteen miles square, containing fields, gardens, and orchards. *Tilima* is also a very strong city, seated in the mountains. From *Tilima* it is three days' journey to *Kibar*, where the people declare themselves of the tribes *Reuben*, *Gad*, and the half-tribe of *Manasseh*, which Shalmaneser, the Assyrian, carried into captivity. They are a singularly belligerent race; they have large and strong cities. They wage constant hostilities with their neighbours, and are almost secure of impunity, by having in their frontier a desert of eighteen days' journey, utterly

uninhabitable by man. The city of Kibar also is large, with about fifty thousand Jews among the inhabitants. They carry on frequent wars with the people of *Sincar* and the north. The other Israelites spread to the east; and the country of *Aliman* touches even the borders of India." We are in some fear that these names will not be found in the modern maps; but the detail is confident, and if the missionary should blunder in the regions between the Euxine and the Caspian, he will have the satisfaction of blundering upon high Rabbinical authority.

But it was to be presumed that a tradition, which had so long excited popular curiosity, would at some time or other be adopted for the purposes of ingenious imposture. How few instances are there of the mysterious death of a prince, or the fall of a dynasty, which have not exhibited a ready succession of dexterous pretenders, from the days of Sebastian of Portugal down to the late Dauphin, the unfortunate son of the unfortunate Louis XVI.! The treatise *Shibboleth* gives a sketch of one of these bold adventurers. In the year of the world the 1466th after the destruction of the second temple (A.D. 1534), there appeared in Europe a man from a distant country, who called himself *Rabbi David*, a *Reubenite*. He went to Rome, where he had an interview with Clement VII., and was favourably received. On being questioned by the pontiff as to himself, he said that he was the Commander-in-Chief of the army of the King of Israel. He was of a Moorish complexion, short in stature, and about forty-five years of age. From Rome he went to Portugal, where he was received by the king; and, understanding only Hebrew and Arabic, spoke generally by an interpreter. He declared that he was sent as ambassador from the Israelite Kings of *Chalach*, *Chabar*, and the nations on the river *Gozan*, to demand assistance,

and peculiarly cannon, from the European princes, that they, the Israelites, might be enabled to make head against their infidel enemies. The Rabbi remained for a considerable time in Portugal, and converted to Judaism one of the king's private secretaries, who, though a Christian, was of Jewish parents. On this conversion, the Rabbi David left the country, and took with him his convert, who now bore the name of *Solomon Malco.* The convert was a man of ability and eloquence; and though he had previously no knowledge of the law, and was of the uncircumcised, yet, when he came among his new brethren, he preached powerfully, especially in Italy, where his expounding both the written and the oral law astonished the most celebrated teachers, and perplexed the people, who wondered where he could have found his singular wisdom. His own account of it was satisfactory; he had been endowed with it by an angel. Solomon Malco now wrote several treatises which increased his fame; he next declared himself to be one of the messengers of the Messiah. He was remarkably handsome, and his manners were high-bred and courteous. Rabbi David, too, had his share of public wonder, for he fasted for six days and nights, without suffering anything to enter his lips—a fact proved by accurate witnesses. But the career of the more aspiring or more active missionary was to have an unhappy close. Rabbi Solomon ventured himself within the presence of Charles v. at Mantua. To what the actual conference amounted has escaped history, but the result was an order that he should be delivered over to the secular arm. The unfortunate zealot was brought to the stake, *gagged*, through fear, as the Jews say, of his using some strong spell, or form of words, by which he might escape his tormentors. His life was offered to him, but he firmly rejected the offer, and died without

shrinking. Rabbi David's career was extinguished at the same time, but by a less cruel catastrophe. He was sent a prisoner into Spain, where he died.

Subsequent narratives state that the two missionaries had attempted to convert the King of Portugal, the *Pope*, and the *Emperor*—an attempt which certainly wanted nothing of the boldness of proselytism; and that the Rabbi's refusal to be converted in turn was the immediate cause of the sentence. Solomon was burned in Mantua, A.D. 1540.

But to those who desire a more detailed account of the expatriated and long-hidden nations, let the learned Rabbi *Eldad* the *Danite* supply intelligence. "There," says this faithful topographer, "is the tribe of Moses, our instructor, the just, and the servant of Heaven. Those Jews are surrounded with the river *Sabbatajon*, the compass of which is as much as one can walk in three months. They live in stately houses, and have magnificent buildings and towers erected by themselves. There is no unclean thing among them; no scorpion, no serpent, no wild beast. Their flocks and herds bring forth twice a year. They have gardens, stocked with all kinds of fruits; but they neither sow nor reap. They are a people of faith, and well instructed in the *Mishna*, *Gemara*, and *Aggada*. Their Talmud is written in the Hebrew tongue. They say, our forefathers have taught us out of the mouth of Joshua, out of the mouth of Moses, and out of the mouth of God. They know nothing of the Talmudic doctrines which were in being in the time of the second temple. They lengthen their days to a hundred and twenty years. Neither sons nor daughters die in the lifetime of their parents; they advance to the third and fourth generation. A child drives their cattle many days' journey, because they have neither wild

beasts, murderers, nor evil spirits to fear. Their Levites labour in the law and in the commandments. They see no man, and are seen of none, except the four tribes which dwell on the further side of the river of Ethiopia, *Dan*, *Naphthali*, *Gad*, and *Asser*. The sand of the river Sabbatajon is holy. In an hour-glass it runs six days of the week; but on the seventh it is immovable. The people are twice as numerous as when they left Judea."

But those narratives are endless. Though probably containing some fragments of truth, the fact is so encumbered with the fiction that they become a mere matter of romance. But the graver consideration remains: Are such things the wisdom of the chosen people? Are the reveries of the Talmuds the study by which the learned of the Jews at this hour are to be advanced in sacred knowledge? Are those giddy and wandering inventions to be the substitute for those "Oracles," which the greatest writer of their nation, even Saul of Tarsus, pronounced to be the pre-eminent privilege of the sons of Israel? Unhappily, the question cannot be answered in the negative. The Talmuds are at this hour the fount from which the immense multitude of Judaism draw all their knowledge of religion. Some learned men among them may study the learning of the Scriptures. Some holy men among them—for there are those even in the community of Israel, who have not been utterly forsaken by the light of truth—the seven thousand who have not yet bowed the knee to Baal, may love the wisdom of inspiration. But to the majority the Talmuds are the grand obstruction to light and knowledge, the fatal source of that stubborn resistance to sacred truth, and to the severest lessons of national suffering, which, even in all the advances of later times, keeps the Jew in irremediable darkness and inexorable chains.

MODERN GREECE.*

WHAT are the nuisances, special to Greece, which repel tourists from that country? They are three—robbers, fleas, and dogs. It is remarkable that all are, in one sense, respectable nuisances—they are ancient, and of classical descent. The monuments still existing from pre-Christian ages, in memory of honest travellers assassinated by brigands of klephts (Κλεπται), show that the old respectable calling of freebooters by sea and land, which Thucydides, in a well-known passage, describes as so reputable an investment for capital during the times preceding his own, and, as to northern Greece, even during his own, had never entirely languished, as with us it has done, for two generations, on the heaths of Bagshot, Hounslow, or Finchley. Well situated as these grounds were for doing business, lying at such convenient distances from the metropolis, and studying the convenience of all parties (since, if a man were destined to lose a burden on his road, surely it was pleasing to his feelings that he had not been suffered to act as porter over ninety or a hundred miles, in the service of one who would neither pay him nor thank him); yet,

* 1842. *Journal of a Tour in Greece and the Ionian Islands.* By William Mure of Caldwell.

finally, what through banks, and what through policemen, the concern has dwindled to nothing. In England, we believe, this concern was technically known amongst men of business and "family men," as the "Low Toby." In Greece it was called *λησταια*; and Homerically speaking, it was perhaps the only profession thoroughly respectable. A few other callings are mentioned in the Odyssey as furnishing regular bread to decent men—viz., the doctor's, the fortune-teller's or conjurer's, and the armourer's. Indeed it is clear, from the offer made to Ulysses of a job, in the way of hedging and ditching, that sturdy big-boned beggars, or what used to be called "Abraham men" in southern England, were not held to have forfeited any heraldic dignity attached to the rank of pauper (which was considerable), by taking a farmer's pay where mendicancy happened to be "looking downwards." Even honest labour was tolerated, though, of course, disgraceful. But the Corinthian order of society, to borrow Burke's image, was the bold sea-rover, the buccaneer, or (if you will call him so) the robber in all his varieties. Titles were, at that time, not much in use—honorary titles we mean; but had our prefix of "Right Honourable" existed, it would have been assigned to burglars, and by no means to privy-councillors; as again our English prefix of "Venerable" would have been settled, not on so sheepish a character as the archdeacon, but on the spirited appropriator of church plate. We were surprised lately to find, in a German work of some authority, so gross a misconception of Thucydides, as that of supposing him to be in jest. Nothing of the sort. The question which he represents as once current, on speaking a ship in the Mediterranean, "Pray, gentlemen, are you robbers?" actually occurs in Homer; and to Homer, no doubt, the historian alludes. It neither was, nor could be

conceived, as other than complimentary; for the alternative supposition presumed him that mean and well-known character—the merchant, who basely paid for what he took. It was plainly asking, Are you a knight grand-cross of some martial order, or a sort of costermonger? And we give it as no hasty or fanciful opinion, that the South Sea islands (which Bougainville held to be in a state of considerable civilisation) had, in fact, reached the precise stage of Homeric Greece. The power of levying war, as yet not sequestered by the ruling power of each community, was a private right inherent in every individual of any one state against all individuals of any other. Captain Cook's ship, the Resolution, and her consort, the Adventure, were as much independent states and objects of lawful war to the islanders, as Owyhee, in the Sandwich group, was to Tongataboo in the Friendly group. So that to have taken an Old Bailey view of the thefts committed on the deck was unjust, and, besides, ineffectual; the true remedy being by way of treaty or convention with the chiefs of every island. And perhaps, if Homer had tried it, the same remedy (in effect, regular payments of *black-mail*) might have been found available in *his* day.

It is too late to suggest *that* idea now. The princely pirates are gone; and the last dividend has been paid upon their booty; so that, whether he gained or lost by them, Homer's estate is not liable to any future inquisitions from commissioners of bankruptcy or other sharks. He, whether amongst the plundered, or, as is more probable, a considerable shareholder in the joint-stock privateers from Tenedos, &c., is safe both from further funding and refunding. We are not. And the first question of moment to any future tourist is, What may be the present value, at a British insurance office, of any given life risked upon a tour in

Greece? Much will, of course, depend upon the extent and the particular route. A late prime minister of Greece, under the reigning king Otho, actually perished by means of one day's pleasure excursion from Athens, though meeting neither thief nor robber. He lost his way; and this being scandalous in an ex-chancellor of the exchequer having ladies under his guidance, who were obliged, like those in the Midsummer Night's Dream, to pass the night in an Athenian wood, his excellency died of vexation. Where may not men find a death? But we ask after the calculation of any office which takes extra risks; and, as a basis for such a calculation, we submit the range of tour sketched by Pausanias, more than sixteen centuries back—that Παυσανιακη περιοδος, as Colonel Leake describes it, which carries a man through the heart of all that can chiefly interest in Greece. Where are the chances, upon such a compass of Greek travelling, having only the ordinary escort and arms, or having *no* arms (which the learned agree in thinking the safer plan at present), that a given traveller will revisit the glimpses of an English moon, or again embrace his "placens uxor?" As with regard to Ireland, it is one stock trick of Whiggery to treat the chances of assassination in the light of an English hypochondriacal chimera, so for a different reason it has been with regard to Italy, and soon will be for Greece. Twenty years ago it was a fine subject for jesting—the English idea of stilettos in Rome, and masqued bravos, and assassins who charged so much an inch for the depth of their wounds. But all the laughter did not save a youthful English marriage-party from being atrociously massacred; a grave English professional man with his wife from being carried off to a mountainous captivity, and reserved from slaughter only by the prospect of ransom; a British nobleman's son from death

or the consequences of Italian barbarity; or a prince, made such by the universal Father of Christendom, the brother of Napoleon, from having the security of his mansion violated, and the most valuable captives carried off by daylight from his household. In Greece apparently the state of things is worse, because absolutely worse under a far slighter temptation. But Mr. Mure is of opinion that Greek robbers have private reasons as yet for sparing English tourists.

So far then is certain: viz., that the positive danger is greater in poverty-stricken Greece than in rich and splendid Italy. But as to the valuation of the danger, positively and not relatively, it is probably as yet imperfect from mere defect of experience: the total amount of travellers is unknown. And it may be argued that at least Colonel Leake, Mr. Dodwell, and our present Mr. Mure, with as many more as have written books, cannot be among the killed, wounded, and missing. There is evidence in octavo that they are yet "to the fore." Still with respect to books, after all, they may have been posthumous works: or, to put the case in another form, who knows how many excellent works in medium quarto, not less than crown octavo, may have been suppressed and intercepted in their rudiments by these expurgatorial ruffians? Mr. Mure mentions as the exquisite reason for the present fashion of shooting from an ambush first, and settling accounts afterwards, that by this means they evade the chances of a contest. The Greek robber, it seems, knows as well as Cicero that "non semper viator a latrone, nonnunquam etiam latro a viatore occiditur"—a disappointment that makes one laugh exceedingly. Now this rule as to armed travellers is likely to bear hard upon our countrymen, who being rich (else how come they in Greece?) will surely be

brilliantly armed; and thus again it may be said, in a sense somewhat different from Juvenal's—

"Et *vacuus* cantat coram latrone viator;"

Vacuus not of money, but of pistols. Yet on the other hand, though possibly sound law for the thickets of Mount Cithæron, this would be too unsafe a policy as a general rule: too often it is the exposure of a helpless exterior which first suggests the outrage. And perhaps the best suggestion for the present would be, that travellers should carry in their hands an apparent telescope or a reputed walking-cane; which peaceful and natural part of his appointments will first operate to draw out his lurking forest friend from his advantage; and on closer colloquy, if this friend should turn restive, then the "Tuscan artist's tube," contrived of course a double debt to pay, will suddenly reveal another sort of tube, insinuating an argument sufficient for the refutation of any sophism whatever. This is the best compromise which we can put forward with the present dilemma in Greece, where it seems that to be armed or to be unarmed is almost equally perilous—to be armed is to insure a shot from an ambush. But our secret opinion is, that in all countries alike, the only absolute safeguard against highway robbery is—a railway; for then the tables are turned; not he who is stopped incurs the risk, but he who stops: we question whether Samson himself could have pulled up his namesake on the Liverpool railway. Recently, indeed, in the Court of Common Pleas, on a motion to show cause by Sergeant Bompas, in Hewitt *v.* Price, Tindal (Chief-Justice) said—"We cannot call a railway a public security,* I think" (*laughter*); but *we*

* Chief-Justice squinted probably at the Versailles affair, where parties were incinerated; for which, in Yorkshire, there is a local

think otherwise. In spite of "laughter," we consider it a specific against the "Low Toby." And, *en attendant*, there is but one step towards amelioration of things for Greece, which lies in summary ejecting of the Bavarian locusts. Where all offices of profit or honour are engrossed by needy aliens, you cannot expect a cheerful temper in the people. And, unhappily, from moody discontent in Greece to the taking of purses is short transition.

Thus have we disposed of "St. Nicholas's Clerks." Next we come to fleas and dogs: Have we a remedy for these? We have: but as to fleas, applicable or not, according to the purpose with which a man travels. If, as happened at times to Mr. Mure, a natural, and, for his readers, a beneficial anxiety to see something of domestic habits, overcomes all sense of personal inconvenience, he will wish, at any cost, to sleep in Grecian bedrooms, and to sit by German hearths. On the other hand, though sensible of the honour attached to being bit by a flea lineally descended from an Athenian flea that in one day may possibly have bit three such men as Pericles, Phidias, and Euripides, many quiet, unambitious travellers might choose to dispense with "glory," and content themselves with a view of Greek *external* nature. To these persons we would recommend the plan of carrying amongst their baggage a tent, with portable camp-beds; one of those, as originally invented upon the encouragement of the Peninsular campaigns from 1809 to 1814, and subsequently

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word—*crozelled*, applied to those who lie down upon a treacherous lime-pit, whose crust gives way to their weight. But if he meant security in the sense of public funds, Chief-Justice was still more in error, as he will soon learn. For the British railways now yield a regular income of three millions per annum—one-tenth of the interest of the national debt; offer as steady an investment as the three per cent. consols; and will soon be quoted in other securities.

improved, would meet all ordinary wants. It is objected, indeed, that by this time the Grecian fleas must have colonized the very hills and woods: as once, we remember, upon Westminster Bridge, to a person who proposed bathing in the Thames by way of a ready ablution from the July dust, another replied, "My dear sir, by no means; the river itself is dusty. Consider what it is to have received the dust of London for nineteen hundred years since Cæsar's invasion, without having once been swept." But in any case the water-cups, in which the bed-posts rest, forbid the transit of creatures not able to swim or to fly. A flea indeed leaps; and, by all report, in a way that far beats a tiger—taking the standard of measurement from the bodies of the competitors. But even this may be remedied: giving the maximum leap of a normal flea, it is always easy to raise the bed indefinitely from the ground—space upwards is unlimited—and the supporters of the bed may be made to meet in one pillar, coated with so viscous a substance as to put even a flea into chancery.

As to dogs, the case is not so easily settled; and before the reader is in a condition to judge of our remedy, he ought to understand the evil in its whole extent. After all allowances for vermin that waken you before your time, or assassins that send you to sleep before your time, no single Greek nuisance can be placed on the same scale with the dogs attached to every *ménage*, whether household or pastoral. Surely as a stranger approaches to any inhospitable door of the peasantry, often before he knows of such a door as in *rerum natura*, out bounds upon him by huge careering leaps a horrid infuriated ruffian of a dog—oftentimes a huge *molos*, big as an English cow—active as a leopard, fierce as a hyena, but more powerful by much, and quite as little disposed to hear reason. So situated—seeing

an enemy in motion with whom it would be as idle to negotiate as with an earthquake—what is the bravest man to do? Shoot him? Ay; that was pretty much the course taken by a young man who lived before Troy: and see what came of it. This man, in fact a boy of seventeen, had walked out to see the city of Mycenæ—which in those day was as fashionable as Baden-Baden—leaving his elder cousin at the hotel sipping his wine. Out sprang a huge dog from the principal house in what you might call the High Street of Mycenæ; the young man's heart began to palpitate; he was in that state of excitement which affects most people when fear mingles with excessive anger. What was he to do? Pistols he had none, not even Colt's revolvers. And, as nobody came out to his aid, he put his hand to the ground; seized a *chermadion* (or paving-stone), smashed the skull of the odious brute, and with quite as much merit as Count Robert of Paris was entitled to have claimed from his lucky hit in the dungeon, then walked off to report his little exploit to his cousin at the hotel? But what followed? The wretches in the house, who never cared to show themselves so long as it might only be the dog killing a boy, all came tumbling out by crowds when once it became clear that a boy had killed the dog. "*A la lanterne!*" they yelled out; valiantly charged *en masse;* and among them they managed to kill the boy. But there was a reckoning to pay for this. Had they known who it was that sat drinking at the hotel, they would have thought twice before they backed their brute. That cousin, whom the poor boy had left at his wine, happened to be an ugly customer—Hercules *incog.* It is needless to specify the result. The child unborn had reason to rue the murder of the boy. For his cousin proved quite as deaf to all argument or submission as their own foul

thief of a dog or themselves. Suffice it that the royal house of Mycenæ, in the language of Napoleon's edicts, ceased to reign. But here is the evil; few men leave a Hercules at their hotel; and all will have to stand the vindictive fury of the natives for their canine friends, if you should happen to pistol them. Be it in deliverance of your own life, or even of a lady's by your side, no apology would be listened to. In fact, besides the disproportionate annoyance to a traveller's nerves, that he shall be kept uneasy at every turn of the road in mere anxiety as to the next recurrence of struggles so desperate, it arms the indignation of a bold Briton beforehand—that a horrid brute shall be thought entitled to kill *him*; and if he *does*, it is pronounced an accident: but if he, a son of the mighty island, kills the brute, instantly a little hybrid Greek peasant shall treat it as murder.

Many years ago, we experienced the selfsame annoyance in the north of England. Let no man talk of courage in such cases. Most justly did Maréchal Saxe ask an officer sneeringly, who protested that he had never known the sensation of fear, and could not well imagine what it was like, had he never snuffed a candle with his fingers? "Because, in that case," said the veteran, "I fancy you must have felt afraid of burning your thumb." A brave man, on a service of known danger, braces up his mind by a distinct effort to the necessities of his duty. The great sentiment that it is his duty, the sentiments of honour and of country, reconcile him to the service while it lasts. No use, besides, in ducking before shot, or dodging, or skulking; he that faces the storm most cheerfully, has after all the best chance of escaping—were that the object of consideration. But, as soon as this trial is over, and the energy called forth by a high tension of duty has relaxed, the very

same man often shrinks from ordinary trials of his prowess. Having, perhaps, little reason for confidence in his own bodily strength, seeing no honour in the struggle, and sure that no duty would be hallowed by any result, he shrinks from it in a way which surprises those who have heard of his martial character. Brave men in extremities are many times the most nervous, and the shyest under perils of a mean order. We, without claiming the benefit of these particular distinctions, happened to be specially "soft" on on this one danger from dogs. Not from the mere terror of a bite, but from the shocking doubt besieging such a case for four or five months that hydrophobia may supervene. Think, excellent reader, if we should suddenly prove hydrophobous in the middle of this paper, how would you distinguish the hydrophobous from the non-hydrophobous parts? You would say, as Voltaire of Rousseau, "Sa plume apparemment brûlera le papier." Such being the horror ever before our mind—images of eyeballs starting from their sockets, spasms suffocating the throat—we could not see a dog starting off into a yell of sudden discovery bound for the foot of our legs, but that undoubtedly a mixed sensation of panic and fury overshadowed us; a χερμαδιον was not always at hand; and without practice we could have little confidence in our power of sending it home, else many is the head we should have crushed. Sometimes, where more than one dog happened to be accomplices in the outrage, we were not altogether out of danger. "Euripides," we said, "was really torn to pieces by the dogs of a sovereign prince; in Hounslow, but a month since, a little girl was all but worried by the buck-hounds of a greater sovereign than Archelaus; and why not we by the dogs of a farmer?" The scene lay in Westmorland and Cumberland. Oftentimes it would happen that in summer we had turned aside

from the road; or perhaps the road itself forced us to pass a farm-house from which the family might be absent in the hay-field. Unhappily the dogs in such a case are often left behind. And many have been the fierce contests in which we have embarked; for, as to retreating, be it known that there (as in Greece) the murderous savages will pursue you—sometimes far into the highroad. That result it was which uniformly brought us back to a sense of our own wrong, and finally of our rights. "Come," we used to say, "this is too much; here at least is the king's highway, and things are come to a pretty pass indeed, if we, who partake of a common nature with the king, and write good Latin, whereas all the world knows what sort of Latin is found among dogs, may not have as good a right to standing-room as a low-bred quadruped with a tail like you." Non usque adeo summis permiscuit ima longa dies, &c. We remember no instance which ever so powerfully illustrated the courage given by the consciousness of rectitude. So long as we felt that we were trespassing on the grounds of a stranger we certainly sneaked, we seek not to deny it. But once landed on the highroad, where we knew our own title to be as good as the dog's, not all the world should have persuaded us to budge one foot.

Our reason for going back to these old Cumbrian remembrances will be found in what follows. Deeply incensed at the insults we had been obliged to put up with for years, brooding oftentimes over

"Wrongs unredress'd, and insults unavenged,"

we asked ourselves—Is vengeance hopeless? And at length we hit upon the following scheme of retribution. This it is—useless to myself as it happened on English ground—which we propose as applicable to Greece. Well acquainted with the indomitable spirit of the bull-dog, and the fidelity

of the mastiff, we determined to obtain two such companions; to re-traverse all our old ground; to make a point, like Tulus, of visiting every house where we had been grossly insulted by dogs; and to commit our cause to the management of these new allies. "Let us see," said we, "if they will speak in the same bullying tone *this* time." "But with what ulterior views?" the dispassionate reader asks. The same, we answer, which Mr. Pitt professed as the objects of the Revolutionary war—"Indemnity for the past, and security for the future." Years, however, passed on; Charles X. fell from his throne; the Reform Bill passed; other things occurred, and at last this change struck us—that the dogs, on whom our vengeance would alight, generally speaking, must belong to a second generation, or even a third, in descent from our personal enemies. Now, this vengeance "by procuration" seemed no vengeance at all. But a plan which failed as regarded our own past wrongs, may yet apply admirably to a wrong current and in progress. If we Englishmen may not pistol Greek canine ruffians, at any rate we suppose an English bull-dog has a right to make a tour in Greece. A mastiff, if he pays for his food and lodgings, possesses as good a title to see Athens and the Peloponnesus as a Bavarian, perhaps even as Themistocles in times of old, and a better than a Turk; and, if he cannot be suffered to pass quietly along the roads on his own private affairs, the more is the pity. But assuredly the consequences will not fall on *him;* we know enough of the sublime courage bestowed on that heroic animal, to be satisfied that he will shake the life out of any enemy that Greece can show. The embassy sent by Napoleon to the Shah of Persia about the year 1810, complained much and often of the huge dogs scattered over all parts of Western Asia, whether Turkish or Persian; and, by later

travels amongst the Himalayas, it seems that the same gigantic ruffians prevail in Central Asia. But the noble English bull-dogs, who, being but three in number, did not hesitate for one instant to rush upon the enormous lion at Warwick, will face any enemy in the world, and will come off victors, unless hyperbolically overweighted; a peril which need not be apprehended, except perhaps in Laconia or Messenia.

Here, therefore, we should be disposed to leave the subject. But, as it is curious for itself, is confessedly of importance to the traveller, and has thrown light upon a passage in the Odyssey that had previously been unintelligible, we go on to one other suggestion furnished by the author before us. It is really a discovery; and is more worthy of a place in annotations upon Homer than nine in ten of all that we read :—

"Among the numerous points of resemblance with which the classical traveller cannot fail to be struck, between the habits of pastoral and agricultural life, as still exemplified in Greece, and those which formerly prevailed in the same country, there is none more calculated to arrest his attention than the correspondence of the shepherds' encampments, scattered on the face of the less cultivated districts, with the settlements of the same kind whose concerns are so frequently brought forward in the imagery of the Iliad and Odyssey. Accordingly, the passage of Homer to which the existing peculiarity above described" (viz., of pelting off dogs by large jagged stones) "affords the most appropriate commentary, is the scene where Ulysses, disguised as a beggar, in approaching the farm of the swineherd, is fiercely assaulted by the dogs, but delivered by the master of the establishment. Pope's translation, with the exception of one or two expressions" (amongst which Mr. Mure notices *mastiff* as

"not a good term for a sheep-dog"), "here conveys with tolerable fidelity the spirit of the original :—

"'Soon as Ulysses near the enclosure drew
With open mouths the furious mastiffs flew;
Down sate the sage; and, cautious to withstand,
Let fall the offensive truncheon from his hand.
Sudden the master runs—aloud he calls;
And from his hasty hand the leather falls;
With showers of stones he drives them far away;
The scatter'd dogs around at distance bay.'"—
ODYSS. xiv. 29.

First, however, let us state the personal adventure which occasions this reference to Homer, as it illustrates a feature in Greek scenery, and in the composition of Greek society. In the early part of his travels, on a day when Mr. Mure was within a few hours of the immortal Missolonghi, he (as better mounted) had ridden ahead of his suite. Suddenly he came upon "an encampment of small, low, reed wigwams," which in form resembled "the pastoral capanne of the Roman plain," but were "vastly inferior in size and structure." Women and children were sitting outside : but finally there crawled forth from the little miserable hovels two or three male figures of such gigantic dimensions as seemed beyond the capacity of the entire dwellings. Several others joined them, all remarkable for size and beauty. And one, whose air of authority bespoke his real rank of chief, Mr. Mure pronounces "a most magnificent-looking barbarian." This was a nomad tribe of Wallachian shepherds, descended (it is supposed) from the Dacian colonies, Romans intermingled with natives, founded by the later Cæsars; the prevalent features of their faces are, it seems, Italian; their language is powerfully veined with Latin; their dress, differing from that of all their Albanian neighbours, resembles the dress of Dacian captives sculptured on

the triumphal monuments of Rome; and lastly, their peculiar name, *Vlack Wallachian*, indicates in the Sclavonic language pretty much the same relation to a foreign origin, as in German is indicated by the word *Welsh*: an affinity of which word is said to exist in our word *Walnut*, where *wall* (as the late Mr. Coleridge thinks) means *alien, outlandish*. The evidence, therefore, is as direct for their non-Grecian descent as could be desired. But they are interesting to Greece at this time, because annually migrating from Thessaly in the summer, and diffusing themselves in the patriarchal style with their wives, their children, and their flocks, over the sunny vales of Boeotia, of Peloponnesus, and in general of southern Greece. Their men are huge, but they are the mildest of the human race. Their dogs are huge also; so far the parallel holds. We regret that strict regard to truth forbids us to pursue the comparison.

"I found myself on a sudden," says Mr. Mure, "surrounded by a fierce pack of dogs, of size proportioned to that of their masters, and which rushed forth on every side as if bent on devouring both myself and beast: being altogether unprovided with any means of defence but the rope-end of the same halter that supplied my stirrups, I was (I confess) not a little disconcerted by the assault of so unexpected an enemy." From this he was soon delivered at the moment by some of the gentle giants, who "pelted off the animals with the large loose stones that lay scattered over the rocky surface of the heath." But upon the character of the nuisance, and upon the particular remedy employed, both of which are classical, and older than Troy, Mr. Mure makes the following explanations:—

"The number and ferocity of the dogs that guard the Greek hamlets and sheepfolds, as compared with those kept

for similar purposes in other parts of the world, is one of the peculiarities of this country, which not only first attracts the attention of the tourist, but is chiefly calculated to excite his alarm, and call into exercise his prowess or presence of mind. It is also amongst the features of modern Greek life that supply the most curious illustrations of classical antiquity. Their attacks are not confined to those who approach the premises of which they are the appointed guardians;" they do not limit themselves to defensive war: "in many districts they are in the habit of rushing from a considerable distance to torment the traveller passing along the public track: and when the pastoral colonies, as is often the case, occur at frequent intervals, the nusiance becomes quite intolerable." But in cases where the succession is less continuous, we should imagine that the nuisance was in the same proportion more dangerous; and Mr. Mure acknowledges that under certain circumstances, to a solitary stranger, the risk would be serious; though generally, and in the case of cavalcades, the dogs fasten chiefly upon the horses.

But endless are the compensations which we find in the distributions of nature. Is there a bane? Near it lies an antidote. Is there a disease? Look for a specific in that same neighbourhood. Here, also, the universal rule prevails. As it was destined that Greece in all ages should be scourged by this intestine enemy, it was provided that a twofold specific should travel concurrently with the evil. And because the vegetable specific, in the shape of oaken cudgels, was liable to local failure (at this moment, in fact, from the wreck of her woods by means of incendiary armies, Greece is, for a season, disafforested), there exists a second specific of a mineral character, which (please Heaven?) shall never fail, so long as Greece is Greece. "The usual weapons of defence, employed in such cases by the natives, are the

large loose stones with which the soil is *everywhere* strewed —a natural feature of this region, to which also belongs its own proper share of classic interest." The character of the rocks prevailing in those mountain ridges which intersect the whole of Greece is, that whilst in its interior texture " of iron-hard consistency," yet at the surface it is " broken into detached fragments of infinitely varied dimensions." Balls, bullets, grape, and canister shot, have all been " parked " in inexhaustible magazines ; whilst the leading feature which strikes the mind with amazement in this natural artillery, is its fine *retail* distribution. Everywhere you may meet an enemy : stoop, and everywhere there is shot piled for use. We see a Leibnitzian pre-established harmony between the character of the stratification and the character of the dogs.

Cardinal de Retz explains why that war, in the minority of Louis XIV., was called the *Fronde ;* and it seems that in Greece, where an immortal *fronde* was inevitable, an immortal magazine was supplied for it—one which has been and will continue to be, under all revolutions ; for the uncultured tracts present the missiles equally diffused, and the first rudiments of culture show themselves in collections of missiles along the roads. Hence, in fact, a general mistake of tourists. " It is certain," says Mr. Mure, " that many of the circular mounds, which are noticed in the itineraries under the rubric of *ancient tumulus,* have been heaped up in this manner. It is to these stones that travellers, and the population at large, instinctively have recourse as the most effectual weapon against the assaults of the dogs." The small shot of pebbles, however, or even stones equal to pigeon's eggs, would avail nothing : " those selected are seldom smaller than what a man, exerting his whole force, can conveniently lift and throw with one hand." Thence, in

fact, and from no other cause, comes (as Mr. Mure observes) the Homeric designation of such stones, viz., *chermadion*, or handful; of which he also cites the definition given by Lucian, λιθος χειροπληθης, *a hand-filling stone*. Ninety generations have passed since the Trojan war, and each of the ninety has used the same bountiful magazine. All readers of the *Iliad* must remember how often Ajax or Hector took up *chermadia*, "such as twice five men in our degenerate days could barely lift," launching them at light-armed foes, who positively would not come nearer to take their just share of the sword or spear. "The weapon is the more effectual, owing to the nature of the rock itself, broken as it is in its whole surface into angular and sharp-pointed inequalities, which add greatly to the severity of the wound inflicted. Hence, as most travellers will have experienced, a fall amongst the Greek rocks is unusually painful." It is pleasing to find Homer familiar not only with the use of the weapon, but with its finest external "developments." Not only the stone must be a bouncer, a *chermadion*, with some of the properties (we believe) marking a good cricket-ball, but it ought to be ὀκριοεις—such is the Homeric epithet of endearment, his caressing description of a good brainer, viz., *splinting-jagged*.

This fact of the *chermadic* weight attached to the good war-stone explains, as Mr. Mure ingeniously remarks, a simile of Homer's, which ought to have been pure nonsense for Pope and Cowper, viz., that in describing a dense mist, such as we foolishly imagine peculiar to our own British climate, and meaning to say that a man could scarcely descry an object somewhat ahead of his own station, he says, τοσσον τις τ' ἐπι λευσσει ὁσον τ' ἐπι λααν ἠησι : *so far does man see as he hurls a stone*. Now, in the skirmish of "bickering," this would argue no great limitation of eye-

sight. "Why, man, how far *would* you see? Would you see round a corner?" "A shot of several hundred yards," says Mr. Mure, "were no great feat for a country lad well skilled in the art of stone-throwing." But this is not Homer's meaning—"The cloud of dust" (which went before an army advancing, and which it is that Homer compares to a mist on the hills perplexing the shepherd) "was certainly much denser than to admit of the view extending to such a distance. In the Homeric sense, as allusive to the hurling of the ponderous *chermadion*, the figure is correct and expressive." And here, as everywhere, we see the Horatian parenthesis upon Homer, as one *qui nil molitur inepte*, who never speaks vaguely, never wants a reason, and never loses sight of a reality, amply sustained. Here, then, is a local resource to the British tourist besides the imported one of the bull-dog; and it is remarkable that, except where the dogs are preternaturally audacious, a mere hint of the chermadion suffices. Late in our own experience, too late for glory, we made the discovery that all dogs have a mysterious reverence for a trundling-stone. It calls off attention from the human object, and strikes alarm into the caitiff's mind. He thinks the stone alive. Upon this hint we thought it possible to improve: Stooping down, we "made believe" to launch a stone, when in fact we had none; and the effect generally followed. So well is this understood in Greece, that, according to a popular opinion reported by Mr. Mure, the prevailing habit in Grecian dogs, as well as bitches, of absenting themselves from church, grows out of the frequent bowing and genuflexions practised in the course of the service. The congregation, one and all, simultaneously stoop; the dog's wickedness has made him well acquainted with the meaning of that act; it is a symbol but too significant to his

conscience; and he takes to his heels with the belief that a whole salvo of one hundred and one *chermadia* are fastening on his devoted "hurdies."

Here, therefore, is a suggestion at once practically useful, and which furnishes more than one important elucidation to passages in Homer hitherto unintelligible. For the sake of one other such passage, we shall, before dismissing the subject, pause upon a novel fact communicated by Mr. Mure, which is equally seasonable as a new Homeric light, and as a serviceable hint in a situation of extremity.

In the passage already quoted under Pope's version from *Odyssey*, xiv. 29, what is the meaning of that singular couplet—

> "Down sate the sage; and cautious to withstand,
> Let fall the offensive truncheon from his hand."*

Mr. Mure's very singular explanation will remind the naturalist of something resembling it in the habits of buffaloes. Dampier mentions a case which he witnessed in some oriental island with a Malay population, where a herd of buffaloes continued to describe concentric circles, continually narrowing around a party of sailors, and at last submitted only to the control of children *not too far beyond the state of infancy*. The white breed of wild cattle, once so well known at Lord Tankerville's, in Northumberland, and at one point in the south-west of Scotland, had a similar instinct for regulating the fury of their own attack;

* As respects the *elegance* of this translation, there is good reason to warn the reader that much of the *Odyssey* was let off by contract, like any poor-house proposal for "clods" and "stickings" of beef, to low undertakers, such as Broome and Fenton. Considering the ample fortune which Pope drew from the whole work, we have often been struck by the inexplicable indulgence with which this scandalous partition is treated by Pope's biographers. It is simply the lowest act of self-degradation ever connected with literature.

but it was understood that when the final circle had been woven the spell was perfect, and that the herd would "do business" most effectually. As respects the Homeric case. "I," says Mr. Mure, "am probably not the only reader who has been puzzled to understand the object of this manœuvre" (the sitting down) "on the part of the hero. I was first led to appreciate its full value in the following manner:—At Argos one evening, at the table of General Gordon" (then commanding-in-chief throughout the Morea, and the best historian of the Greek Revolution, but who subsequently resigned, and died in the spring of 1841 at his seat in Aberdeenshire), "the conversation happened to turn, as it frequently does where tourists are in company, on this very subject of the number and fierceness of the Grecian dogs, when one of the company remarked that he knew of a very simple expedient for appeasing their fury. Happening on a journey to miss his road, and being overtaken by darkness, he sought refuge for the night at a pastoral settlement by the wayside. As he approached, the dogs rushed out upon him, and the consequences might have been serious had he not been rescued by an old shepherd (the Eumeus of the fold), who, after pelting off his assailants, gave him a hospitable reception in his hut. The guest made some remark on the zeal of his dogs, and on the danger to which he had been exposed from their attack. The old man replied that it was his own fault, from not taking the customary precaution in such an emergency; that he ought to have stopped, and *sate down* until some person came to protect him." Here we have the very act of Ulysses, with the necessary circumstance that he laid aside his arms; after which the two parties were under a provisional treaty. And Adam Smith's doubtful assumption that dogs are incapable of exchange, or of any reciprocal

understanding, seems still more doubtful. As this expedient was new to the traveller, "he made some further inquiries; and was assured that, if any person in such a predicament will simply seat himself on the ground, laying aside his weapon of defence, the dogs will also squat in a circle round him; that, as long as he remains quiet, they will follow his example; but that as soon as he rises and moves forward, they will renew their assault. This story, though told without the least reference to the *Odyssey*, at once brought home to my own mind the scene at the fold of Eumeus with the most vivid reality. The existence of the custom was confirmed by other persons present, from their own observation or experience." Yet, what if the night were such as is often found even in Southern Greece during winter—a black frost; and that all the belligerents were found in the morning symmetrically grouped as petrifactions? However, here again we have the Homer *qui nil molitur inepte*, who addressed a people of known habits. Yet *quære*—as a matter of some moment for Homeric disputes—were these habits of Ionian colonies, or exclusively of Greece Proper, on which Homer may, after all, not be so good an authority as Murray, price 8s. 6d.

But enough of the repulsive features in Greek travelling. We, for our part, have endeavoured to meet them with remedies both good and novel. Now let us turn to a different question. What are the positive attractions of Greece? What motives are there to a tour so costly? What are the *pros*, supposing the *cons* dismissed? This is a more difficult question than is imagined: so difficult that most people set out without waiting for the answer; they travel first and leave to providential contingencies the chance that, on a review of the tour in its course, some adequate motive may suggest itself. Certainly it may be said, that the word

Greece already in itself contains an adequate motive; and we do not deny that a young man, full of animal ardour and high classical recollections, may, without blame, give way to the mere instincts of wandering. It is a fine thing to bundle up your traps at an hour's warning, and fixing your eye upon some bright particular star, to say, "I will travel after thee; I will have no other mark; I will chase thy rising or thy setting;" that is, on Mr. Wordsworth's hint derived from a Scottish lake, to move on a general object of *stepping westwards*, or *stepping eastwards*. But there are few men qualified to travel, who stand in this free "unhoused" condition of license to spend money, to lose time, or to court peril. In balancing the pretensions of different regions to a distinction so costly as an *effectual* tour, money it is, simply the consideration of cost, which furnishes the chief or sole ground of administration; having but £100 disposable in any one summer, a man finds his field of choice circumscribed at once; and rare is the household that can allow twice that sum annually. He contents himself with the Rhine, or possibly, if more adventurous, he may explore the passes of the Pyrenees; he may unthread the mazes of romantic Auvergne, or make a stretch even to the Western Alps of Savoy.

But for the Mediterranean, and especially for the Levant —these he resigns to richer men; to those who can command from £300 to £500. And next, having submitted to this preliminary limitation of radius, he is guided in selecting from what remains by some indistinct prejudice of his early reading. Many are they in England who start with a blind faith, inherited from Mrs. Radcliffe's romances, and thousands beside, that, in Southern France or in Italy, from the Milanese down to the furthest nook of the Sicilies, it is physically impossible for the tourist to go wrong. And

thus it happens that a spectacle, somewhat painful to good sense, is annually renewed of confiding households leaving a real Calabria in Montgomeryshire or Devonshire, for dreary, sunburned flats in Bavaria, in Provence, in Languedoc, or in the "Legations" of the Papal territory. "Vintagers," at a distance, how romantic a sound! Hops, on the other hand, how mercenary, nay, how culinary, by the feeling connected with their use, or their taxation! Arcadian shepherds again, or Sicilian from the "bank of delicate Galesus," can these be other than poetic? The hunter of the Alpine ibex—can he be other than picturesque? A sandalled monk mysteriously cowled, and in the *distance* (but be sure of *that* /) a band of robbers reposing at noon amidst some Salvator-Rosa-looking solitudes of Calabria—how often have such elements, semi-consciously grouped, and flashing upon the indistinct mirrors lighted up by early reading, seduced English good sense into undertakings terminating in angry disappointment? We acknowledge that the English are the only nation under this romantic delusion; but so saying, we pronounce a very mixed censure upon our country. In itself it is certainly a folly which other nations (Germany excepted) are not above, but very far below; a folly which presupposes a most remarkable distinction for our literature, significant in a high moral degree. The plain truth is, that Southern Europe has no romance in its household literature; has not an organ for comprehending what it is that we mean by Radcliffian romance. The old ancestral romance of knightly adventure, the *Sangrêal*, the *Round Table*, &c., exists for Southern Europe as an antiquarian subject; or if treated æsthetically, simply as a subject adapted to the ludicrous. And the secondary romance of our later literature is to the south unintelligible. No Frenchman, Spaniard, or Italian, at all comprehends the grand

poetic feeling employed and nursed by narrative fictions through the last seventy years in England, though connected by us with their own foolishly exaggerated scenery.

Generally, in speaking of Southern Europe, it may be affirmed that the idea of heightening any of the grander passions by association with the shadowy and darker forms of natural scenery, heaths, mountainous recesses, "forests drear," or the sad desolation of a silent sea-shore, of the desert, or of the ocean, is an idea not developed amongst them, nor capable of combining with their serious feelings. By the evidence of their literature, viz., of their poetry, their drama, their novels, it is an interest to which the whole race is deaf and blind. A Frenchman or an Italian (for the Italian, in many features of Gallic insensibility, will be found ultra-Gallican) can understand a state in which the moving principle is sympathy with the world of conscience. Not that his own country will furnish him with any grand exemplification of such an interest; but, merely as a human being, he cannot escape from a certain degree of human sympathy with the dread tumults going on in that vast theatre—a conscience-haunted mind. So far he stands on common ground with ourselves; but how this mode of shedding terror can borrow any alliance from chapels, from ruins, from monastic piles, from Inquisition dungeons, inscrutable to human justice, or dread confessionals,—all this is unfathomably mysterious to Southern Europe. The Southern imagination is passively and abjectly dependent on *social* interests; and these must conform to modern types. Hence, partly, the reason that only the British travel. The German is generally too poor. The Frenchman desires nothing but what he finds at home: having Paris at hand, why should he seek an inferior Paris in distant lands? To an Englishman this demur could sel-

dom exist. He may think, and, with introductions into the higher modes of aristocratic life, he may know that London and St. Petersburg are far more magnificent capitals than Paris; but *that* will not repel his travelling instincts. A superior London he does not credit or desire; but what he seeks is not a superior, it is a different life; not new degrees of old things, but new kinds of experience are what he asks. His scale of conception is ampler; whereas, generally, the Frenchman is absorbed into one ideal. Why else is it, that, after you have allowed for a few Frenchmen carried of necessity into foreign lands by the diplomatic concerns of so vast a country, and for a few artists travelling in quest of gain or improvement, we hear of no French travellers as a class? And why is it that, except as regards Egypt, where there happens to lurk a secret political object in reversion for France, German literature builds its historic or antiquarian researches almost exclusively upon English travellers? Our travellers may happen or not to be professional; but they are never found travelling for professional objects. Some have been merchants or bankers, many have been ecclesiastics; but neither commercial nor clerical or religious purposes have furnished any working motive, unless where, as express missionaries, they have prepared their readers to expect such a bias to their researches. Colonel Leake, the most accurate of travellers, is a soldier; and in reviewing the field of Marathon, of Platæa, and others deriving their interest from later wars, he makes a casual use of his soldiership. Captain Beaufort, again, as a sailor, uses his nautical skill where it is properly called for. But in the larger proportions of their works, even the professional are not professional; whilst such is our academic discipline, that all alike are scholars. And in this quality of merit the author before us holds a distin-

guished rank. He is no artist, though manifesting the eye learned in art and in landscape. He is not professionally a soldier; he is so only by that secondary tie, which, in our island, connects the landed aristocracy with the landed militia; yet though not, in a technical sense, military, he disputes, with such as *are*, difficult questions of Greek martial history. He is no regular agriculturist, yet he conveys a good general impression of the Greek condition with relation to landed wealth or landed skill, as modified at this moment by the unfortunate restraints on a soil handed over, in its best parts, by a Turkish aristocracy that had engrossed them, to a Bavarian that cannot use them. In short, Mr. Mure is simply a territorial gentleman; elevated enough to have stood a contest for the representation of a great Scottish county; of general information; and, in particular, he is an excellent Greek scholar; which latter fact we gather, not from anything we have heard, but from these three indications meeting together: 1. That his verbal use of Greek, in trying the true meaning of names (such as Mycene, the island of Asteris, &c.), is original as well as accurate. 2. That his display of reading (not volunteered or selected, but determined by accidents of local suggestion) is ample. 3. That the frugality of his Greek citations is as remarkable as their pertinence. He is never tempted into trite references; nor ever allows his page to be encumbered by more of such learning than is severely needed.

With regard to the general motives for travelling, *his* for Greece had naturally some relation to his previous reading; but perhaps an occasional cause, making his true motives operative, may have been his casual proximity to Greece at starting—for he was then residing in Italy. Others, however, amongst those qualified to succeed him,

wanting this advantage, will desire some positive objects of a high value, in a tour both difficult as regards hardships, costly, and too tedious, even with the aids of steam, for those whose starting-point is England. These objects, real or imaginary, in a Greek tour, co-extensive with the new limits of Greek jurisdiction, let us now review :—

I. *The Greek People.*—It is with a view to the Greeks personally, the men, women, and children, who in one sense at least, viz., as occupants of the Greek soil, represent the ancient classical Greeks, that the traveller will undertake this labour. Representatives in one sense! Why, how now? are they not such in all senses? Do they not trace their descent from the classical Greeks? We are sorry to say *not;* or in so doubtful a way, that the interest derived from that source is too languid to sustain itself against the opposing considerations. Some authors have peremptorily denied that one drop of genuine Grecian blood, transmitted from the countrymen of Pericles, now flows in the veins of any Greek subject. Falmereyer, the German, is at the head (we believe) of those who take that view. And many who think Falmereyer in excess, make these unpleasant concessions, viz., 1*st*, That in Athens and throughout Attica, where, by special preference, one would wish to see the Grecian cast of face predominating, *there*, to a single family almost, you may affirm all to be Albanian. Well; but what is Albanian? For the Albanian race, as having its head-quarters in regions once undoubtedly occupied by a Greek race, Epirus, for instance, Acarnania, &c., may still be Grecian by descent: but unfortunately it is not so. The Albanians are no more Grecian, and notoriously no more represent the old legitimate Greeks, who thumped the Persians and whom the Romans thumped, than the modern English represent the Britons, or the modern Lowland

Scotch represent the Scoti, of the centuries immediately following the Christian era. Both English and Lowland Scotch, for the first five centuries after the Christian era, were ranging the forests of north Germany or of southern Sweden. The men who fought with Cæsar, if now represented at all, are so in Wales, in Cornwall, or other western recesses of the island. And the Albanians are held to be a Sclavonic race—such at least is the accredited theory; so that modern Greece is connected with Russia not merely by the bond of a common church, but also by blood, since the Russian people is the supreme branch of the Sclavonic race. This is the first concession made which limits any remnant of the true Greek blood to parts of the ancient Hellas not foremost in general interest, nor most likely to be visited.

A second is, that if any claim to a true Grecian descent does exist extensively, it must be looked for amongst Mahometan clans, descended from renegades of former days, now confounded with our Mussulmans ejected from Greece, and living in Thrace, or other regions under the Sultan's sceptre. But even here the purity of the descent is in the last degree uncertain.

This case is remarkable. From the stationary character of all things in the East, there was a probability beforehand, that several nations—as in particular, four that we will mention: the Greeks, the Egyptians, the Persians, the Affghans—should have presented the same purity of descent, untainted by alien blood, which we find in the children of Ishmael, and the children of his half-brother the patriarch Isaac. Yet, in that case, where would have been the miraculous unity of race predicted for these two nations exclusively by the Scriptures? The fact is, the four nations mentioned have been so profoundly changed by deluges of foreign conquest or

foreign intrusion, that at this day, perhaps, no solitary individual could be found whose ancestral line had not been confounded with other bloods. The Arabs only, and the Jews, are under no suspicion of this hybrid mixture. Vast deserts, which insulate one side of the Arabian peninsula; the sea, which insulates the other sides, have, with other causes, preserved the Arab blood from all general attaint of its purity. Ceremonies, institutions, awful scruples of conscience, and through many centuries, misery and legal persecution, have maintained a still more impassable gulf between the Jews and other races. Spain is the only Christian land where the native blood was at any time intermingled with the Jewish; and hence one cause for the early vigilance of the Inquisition in that country more than elsewhere; hence also the horror of a Jewish taint in the Spanish hidalgo; Judaism masking itself in Christianity, was so keenly suspected, or so haughtily disclaimed, simply because so largely it existed. It was, however, under a very peculiar state of society, that, even during an interval, and in a corner, Jews *could* have intermarried with Christians. Generally, the intensity of reciprocated hatred, long oppression upon the one side, deep degradation upon the other, perpetuated the alienation, had the repulsion of creeds even relaxed. And hence, at this day, the intense purity of the Jewish blood, though probably more than six millions of individuals.

But with respect to the Grecians, as no barrier has ever existed between them and any other race than the Turks,*

* Some will urge the intolerance of the Greeks for Christians of the Latin Church. But that did not hinder alliances, and ambitious attempts at such alliances, with their Venetian masters in the most distinguished of the Greek houses. Witness the infernal atrocities by which the Venetian government avenged at times what they viewed as unpardonable presumption. See their own records.

and these only in the shape of religious scruples, which on one side had the highest political temptation to give way, there was no pledge stronger than individual character, there could be no national or corporate pledge, for the maintenance of this insulation. As therefore, in many recorded cases, the strongest barrier (viz., that against Mahometan alliances) is known to have given way, as in other cases (innumerable, but forgotten), it must be presumed to have given way; this inference follows, viz., that if anywhere the Grecian blood remains in purity, the fact will be entirely without evidence; and for us, the result will be the same as if the fact had no existence. Simply as a matter of curiosity, if our own opinion were asked as to the probability, that in any situation, a true-blooded population yet survives at this day, we should answer that, if anywhere, it will be found in the most sterile of the Greek islands. Yet, even there the bare probability of such a result will have been open to many disturbances; and especially if the island happen to be much in the way of navigators, or the harbours happen to be convenient, or if it happen to furnish a good stage in a succession of stages (according to the ancient usages of Mediterranean seamanship), or if it possessed towns containing accumulations of provisions or other stores, or offered good watering-places; under any of these endowments, an island might be tempting to pirates, or to roving adventures, or to remote overpeopled parts of Italy, Africa, Asia Minor, &c.; in short, to any vicious city where but one man amongst the poorer classes knew the local invitations to murderous aggressions. Under so many contingencies operative through so many centuries, and revolutions so vast upon nations so multiplied, we believe that even a poor unproductive soil is no absolute pledge for non-molestation to the most obscure of recesses.

For instance, the poorest district of the large island Crete, might (if any could) be presumed to have a true Greek population. There is little to be found in that district beyond the means of bare subsistence; and (considering the prodigious advantages of the ground for defensive war) little to be looked for by an invader but hard knocks, "more kicks than halfpence," so long as there was any indigenous population to stand up and kick. But often it must have happened in a course of centuries, that plague, small-pox, cholera, the sweating-sickness, or other scourges of universal Europe and Asia, would absolutely depopulate a region no larger than an island; as in fact, within our brief knowledge of the New Hollanders, has happened through small-pox alone, to entire tribes of those savages; and, upon a scale still more awful, to the American Indians. In such cases, mere strangers would oftentimes enter upon the lands as a derelict. The Sfakians, in that recess of Crete which we have noticed, are not supposed by scholars to be a true Grecian race; nor do we account them such. And one reason of our own, superadded to the common reasons against allowing a Greek origin, is this:—The Sfakians are a large-limbed, fine-looking race, more resembling the Wallachians whom we have already noticed, than the other races of Crete, or the other Greek islanders, and like the Wallachians, are often of colossal stature. But the classical Greeks, we are pretty certain, were a race of little men. We have more arguments than one for this belief. But one will be sufficient. The Athenian painter who recorded the Battle of Marathon in fresco upon the walls of a portico, was fined for representing the Persians as conspicuously taller than the Greeks. But why? Why should any artist have ascribed such an advantage to the enemy, unless because it was a fact?

What plausible motive, other than the notoriety of the fact, can be imagined in the painter? In reality, this artist proceeded as a general rule amongst the Greeks, and a rule strictly, if not almost superstitiously observed, and of ancient establishment, which was, that all conquerors in any contest, or at any games, olympic, or whatsoever they might be, were memorialized by statues exactly representing the living man in the year of victory, taken even with their personal defects. The dimensions were preserved with such painful fidelity, as though the object had been to collect and preserve for posterity, a series from every generation, of those men who might be presumed by their trophies to have been the models by natural prefiguration for that particular gymnastic accomplishment in which they had severally excelled. [See the *Acad. des Inscriptions*, about the year 1725.] At the time of Marathon, fought against the lieutenant of Darius, the Olympic games had existed for two hundred years, *minus* thirteen; and at the closing battle of Platæa, fought against the lieutenant of Xerxes, for two hundred, *minus* only two. During all this period, it is known for certain, perhaps even from far older times, that this rule of exact *portraiture*, a rigid demand for duplicates or fac-similes of the individual men, had prevailed in Greece. The enormous amount of Persian corpses buried by the Greeks (or perhaps by Persian prisoners), in the Polyandrium on the field of battle, would be measured and observed by the artists against the public application for their services. And the armour of those select men-at-arms, or ὁπλιται, who *had* regular suits of armour, would remain for many centuries suspended as consecrated αναθηματα in the Grecian temples; so that Greek artists would never want sure records of the Persian dimensions. Were it not for this rule, applied sternly to all real conflicts, it might

have been open to imagine that the artist had exaggerated the persons of the enemy by way of exalting to posterity the terrors which their ancestors had faced; a more logical vanity than that inverse artifice imputed to Alexander, of burying in the Punjab gigantic mangers and hyperbolical suits of armour, under the conceit of impressing remote ages with a romantic idea of the bodily proportions in the men and horses composing the *élite* of the Macedonian army. This was the true secret for disenchanting the martial pretensions of his army. Were you indeed such colossal men? In that case, the less is your merit; of which most part belongs manifestly to a *physical* advantage: and in the ages of no gunpowder the advantage was less equivocal than it is at present. In the other direction, the logic of the Greek artist who painted Marathon is more cogent. The Persians were numerically superior, though doubtless this superiority has been greatly exaggerated, not wilfully so much as from natural mistakes incident to the oriental composition of armies; and still more on the Grecian side, from extreme inaccuracy in the original reports, which was so great that even Herodotus, who stood removed from Platæa at the time of commencing his labours, by pretty much the same interval as we in 1842 from Waterloo, is rightly observed by Colonel Leake (*Travels in Greece*) to have stated to him the Greek numbers on the great day of Platæa, rather from the basis of fixed rateable contingents which each state was bound to furnish, than of any positive return that he could allege. However, on the whole, it seems undeniable that even at Platæa, much more at Marathon, the Persians had the advantage in numbers. If, besides this numerical advantage, they had another in qualities of bodily structure, the inference was the greater to the Grecian merit. So far from slighting a Persian advantage

which really existed, a Greek painter might rather be suspected of inventing one which did not. We apprehend, however, that he invented nothing. For, besides that subsequent intercourse with Persians would have defeated the effect of his representation had it reposed on a fiction, it is known that the Greeks did not rightly appreciate tallness. "Procerity," to use Dr. Johnson's tall word in speaking of the Prussian regiment, was underrated in Greece; perhaps for this reason, that in some principal gymnastic contests, running, leaping, horsemanship, and charioteering, it really *was* a disadvantage. The best jockeys at Newmarket and Doncaster are always little men. And hence possibly arose a fact which has been often noticed with surprise, viz., that the legendary Hercules was never delineated by the Greek artists as more than an athletic man of the ordinary standard with respect to height and bulk. The Greek imagination was extravagantly mastered by physical excellence; this is proved by the almost inconceivable value attached to gymnastic merit. Nowhere, except in Greece, could a lyrical enthusiasm have been made available in such a service. But amongst physical qualities they did not adequately value that of lofty stature. At all events, the rule of portraiture —the whole portrait and nothing but the portrait—which we have mentioned as absolute for Greece, coerced the painter into the advantageous distinction for the Persians which we have mentioned. And this rule, *as servile to the fact*, is decisive for the Greek proportions of body in comparison with the Persian.

But were not some tribes amongst the Greeks celebrated for their stature? Yes; the Daulians, for instance, both men and women: and in some modern tourist we remember a distinction of the same kind claimed for the *present* occupants of Daulis. But the ancient claim had reference

only to the Grecian scale. Tall, were they? Yes, but tall for Grecians. The Romans were possibly a shade taller than the Greeks, but they also were a little race of men. This is certain. And, if a man were incautious enough to plead in answer the standard of the modern Italians, who are often both tall and athletic, he must be reminded that to Tramontanes, in fact, such as Goths, Heruli, Scyrra, Lombards, and other tribes of the Rhine, Lech, or Danube, Italy is indebted for the improved breed of her carcases.* Man, instead of degenerating according to the scandalous folly of books, very slowly improves everywhere; and the carcases of the existing generation, weighed off, million for million, against the carcases of any pre-Christian generation,

* It may be remarked, as a general prevailing tendency amongst the great Italian masters of painting, that there is the same conspicuous leaning to regard the gigantic as a vulgar straining after effect. Witness St. Paul before Agrippa, and St. Paul at Athens; Alexander the Great, or the Archangel Michael. Nowhere throughout the whole world is the opposite defect carried to a more intolerable excess than amongst the low (but we regret to add—and in all but the very highest) of London artists. Many things, which the wretched Von Raumer said of English art, were abominable and malicious falsehoods; circulated not for London, but for Berlin, and Dresden, where English engravers and landscape-painters are too justly prized by the wealthy purchasers not to be hated by the needy sellers. Indeed, to hear Von Raumer's account of our water-colour exhibitions, you would suppose that such men as Turner, Dewint, Prout, and many others, had no merit whatever, and no name except in London. Raumer is not an honest man. But had he fixed his charges on the book-decorators amongst us, what an unlimited field for ridicule the most reasonable! In most sentimental poems, the musing young gentlemen and ladies usually run to seven and eight feet high. And in a late popular novel connected with the Tower of London, by Mr. Ainsworth [which really pushes its falsifications of history to an unpardonable length, as *e.g.* in the case of the gentle victim Lady Jane Grey], the Spanish ambassador seems to us at least fourteen feet high; and his legs meant for some ambassador who happened to be twenty-seven feet high.

we feel confident would be found to have the advantage by many thousands of stones [the butchers' stone is eight pounds] upon each million. And universally the best *prima facie* title to a pure Greek descent will be an elegantly formed, but somewhat under-sized, person, with a lively, animated, and intelligent physiognomy; of which last may be said, that, if never in the highest sense rising to the noble, on the other hand, it never sinks to the brutal. At Liverpool, we used to see in one day many hundreds of Greek sailors from all parts of the Levant; these were amongst the most probable descendants from the children of Ion or of Œolus, and the character of their person was what we describe—short but symmetrical figures and faces, upon the whole, delicately chiselled. These men generally came from the Greek islands.

Meantime, what is Mr. Mure's opinion upon this much-vexed question? Into the general problem he declines to enter; not, we may be sure, from want of ability to treat it with novelty and truth. But we collect that he sees no reason for disputing the general impression, that an Albanian or hybrid population is mainly in possession of the soil, and that perhaps he would say, *lis est de paupere regno;* for, if there is no beauty concerned in the decision, nor any of the quality of physical superiority, the less seems the value of the dispute. To appropriate a set of plain faces, to identify the descent of ordinary bodies, seems labour lost. And in the race now nominally claiming to be Grecian, Mr. Mure evidently finds only plain faces, and ordinary bodies. Those, whom at any time he commends for beauty or other advantages of person, are tribes confessedly alien; and, on the other hand, with respect to those claiming to be Greek, he pronounces a pointed condemnation by disparaging their women. It is notoriously

a duty of the female sex to be beautiful, if they can, with a view to the recreation of us males—whom Lily's Grammar affirms to be "of the worthier gender." Sitting at breakfast (which consisted "of red herrings and Gruyère cheese"), upon the shore of Megara, Mr. Mure beheld the Megarensian lasses mustering in force for a general ablution of the Megarensian linen. The nymphs had not turned out upon the usual principles of female gatherings—

"Spectatum veniunt, veniunt spectentur ut ipsæ;"

and yet, between them, the two parties reciprocated the functions. Each to the other was a true spectacle. A long Scotchman,

"Qui siccâ solus secum spatiatur arenâ,"

and holding in his dexter mauley a red herring, whilst a white table-cloth (the centre of his motions) would proclaim some mysterious rite, must to the young ladies have seemed a merman suddenly come up from the sea, without sound of conch; whilst to him the large deputation from female Megara furnished an extra theatre for the inspection of Greek beauty. "There was no river mouth visible, the operation being performed in the briny sea itself;" and, so far from this being unusual, Mr. Mure notices it as a question of embarrassment to the men of Plutarch's age, why the Phœacian princess in the Odyssey did *not* wash in the sea, but mysteriously preferred the river (*Sympos. I. qu.* 9); but as to beauty, says Mr. Mure, "I looked in vain for a figure, which either as to face or form could claim even a remote resemblance to Nausicaä. The modern Greek woman indeed appeared to me, upon the whole, about the most ill-favoured I have met with in any country." And it attests the self-consistency of Mr. Mure, that in Arácova, the only place where he notices the women as having any

pretensions to beauty, he and others agree that their countenances are not true to the national type; they are generally reputed to offer something much nearer to the bloom and the *embonpoint* of female rustics in Germany; and accordingly, it is by the Bavarian officers of King Otho's army that these fair Arácovites have been chiefly raised into celebrity. We cannot immediately find the passage in Mr. Mure's book relating to Arácova; but we remember that, although admitting the men to be a tolerably handsome race, he was disappointed in the females. Tall they are, and stout, but not, he thinks, beautiful.

Yet, in dismissing this subject of personal appearance, as the most plausible test now surviving for the claim of a pure Greek descent, we must not forget to explain—that it is far from our design to countenance the hypothesis of any *abrupt* supercession, at any period or by any means, to the old Grecian blood. The very phrase of "national type," which we used in the last paragraph, and the diffusion of a language essentially Greek, argue at once a slow and gradational transition of the population into its present physical condition. Mr. Mure somewhere describes, as amongst the characteristics of the present race, swarthiness and leanness. These we suspect to have been also characteristic of the old original *ton d'apameibomenoi* Greeks. If so, the fact would seem to argue, that the changes, after all, had not been on a scale sufficient to obliterate the primitive type of Hellenic nature; whilst the existence of any *diffused* type marks a tendency to national unity, and shows that some one element has so much predominated as to fuse the rest into a homogeneous whole. Indeed, it is pretty certain that a powerful cross in any human breed, whatever effects it may have in other respects, leaves the intellect improved—if not in the very highest qualities, yet

in mobility, activity, and pertinacity of attention. The Greek nation has also shown itself morally improved; their revolutionary war evoked and tried, as in a furnace, the very finest qualities of courage, both adventurous and enduring; and we heartily agree in the sentiment delivered so ably by Mr. Mure, that the struggles of these poor shepherds and herdsmen, driven into caves and thickets, and having no great rallying principle but the banner of the Cross against the Crescent, were as much more truly sublime in suffering and in daring, than the classical struggles against the Persians, as they are and will be more obscure in the page of general history. We do not at all question great stamina and noble elements in the modern Greek character—generations of independence will carry this character to excellence; but still we affirm, that he who looks for direct descendants from the race of Miltiades, Pericles, or Epaminondas, is likely to be disappointed; and most disappointed in that Athens, which for all of us alike (as appealing to our imaginative feelings) still continues to be what it was for Cicero—true and very Greece; in which, therefore, of all cities locally recalling the classical times, we can least brook a disappointment.

If not the people of Greece, is it then the NATURAL SCENERY of Greece which can justify the tourist in this preference? Upon this subject it is difficult to dispute. What a man is likely to relish in scenery—what style or mode of the natural picturesque; and, *secondly*, what weight or value he will allow to his own preferences—are questions exceedingly variable. And the latter of these questions is the more important, for the objection is far less likely to arise against this mode of scenery or that, since every *characteristic* mode is relished as a change, than universally against all modes alike as adequate indemnifications

for the toils of travelling. Female travellers are apt to talk of "scenery" as all in all, but men require a social interest superadded. Mere scenery palls upon the mind, where it is the sole and ever-present attraction relied on. It should come unbidden and unthought of, like the warbling of birds, to sustain itself in power. And at feeding-time, we observe that men of all nations and languages, *Tros Tyriusve*, grow savage, if, by a fine scene, you endeavour to make amends for a bad beef-steak. The scenery of the Himalaya will not "draw houses" till it finds itself on a line of good hotels.

This difference, noted above, between the knowledge and the power of a scenery-hunter may be often seen illustrated in the fields of art. How common is the old sapless connoisseur in pictures, who retains his learned eye and his distinguished skill, but whose sensibilities are as dry as summer dust to the interests of the art? On the other hand, daily you see young people whose hearts and souls are in the forests and the hills, but for whom the eye is perfectly untutored. If, now, to the differences in this respect you add the extensive differences which prevail as to the kinds of scenery, it is easy to understand how rich in the materials for schism must be every party that starts up on the excitement of mere scenery. Some laud the Caucasus; some the northern and eastern valleys of Spain; some the Alpine scenery; some the Pyrenean. All these are different; and from all alike differs again what Mr. Mure classes as the classical character of scenery. For this, he thinks a regular education of the eye requisite. Such an education he himself had obtained from a residence in Italy. And, subject to that condition, he supposes the scenery on the Eurotas (to the eastern side of the Peloponnesus) the most delightful in Europe. We know not. It

may be so. For ourselves, the obscure sense of being or moving under a vast superincumbency of some great natural power, as of a mighty forest, or a trackless succession of mountainous labyrinths, has a charm of secret force far better than any distinct scenes to which we are introduced. Such things ought not to be. But still so it is, that tours in search of the picturesque are particularly apt to break up in quarrels. Perhaps on the same principle which has caused a fact generally noticed, viz., that conchologists, butterfly-fanciers, &c., are unusually prone to commit felonies, because too little of a human interest circulates through their arid pursuits. The morbid irritation accumulates until the amateur rushes out with a knife, lets blood in some quarter, and so restores his own connexion with the vitalities of human nature. In any case, we advise the Greek tourist to have at least two strings to his bow besides scenery.

III.—Is it, then, the monuments of the antique, the memorials of Pericles and Phidias, which a man should seek in Greece? If so, no great use in going beyond Athens. Because, though more solemn images survive in other places, associated with powers more mysterious and ages more remote, as the gate of Lions at Mycenæ, or the relics yet standing (and perhaps to stand for ever) of Cyclopean cities, forms of art that for thousands of years have been dying away through dimness of outlines and vegetable overgrowth into forms of nature—yet in Athens only is there a great open museum of such monuments. The Athenian buildings, though none of them Homeric in point of origin, are old enough for us. Two-and-a-half millennia satisfy our grovelling aspirations. And Mr. Mure himself, whilst insisting on their too youthful character, admits that they are "superior in number, variety, and elegance to

those which the united cities of Greece can now show." Yet even these pure monuments have been combined with modern aftergrowths, as in the case of the Propylœa, of which multitudes doubt [Mr. Mure in particular] whether they can now be detached from the connexion with effect. For more reasons than one, it will, perhaps, be advisable to leave them in their present condition, and that is as hybrid as the population. But, with respect to Athenian buildings, it strikes our feelings, that finish and harmony are essential conditions to their effect. Ruins are becoming to Gothic buildings; decay is there seen in a graceful form; but to an Attic building decay is more expressive of disease—it is scrofula; it is phagedænic ulcer. And unless the Bavarian government can do more than is now held out or hoped, towards the restoration and *disengagement* of the public buildings surmounting the city, we doubt whether there will not be as much of pain as of an artist's pleasure in a visit to the Athenian capital, though now raised to the rank of metropolis for universal Greece.

IV.—There are, however, mixed monuments, not artificial in their origin, but which gradually came to act upon the feelings as such from their use and habitual connexion with human purposes. Such for instance is the Acro-Corinthus, of which Mr. Mure says, that it "is by far the most striking object that I have ever seen, either abroad or at home. Neither the Acropolis of Athens, nor the Larissa of Argos, nor even Gibraltar, can enter into the remotest competition with this gigantic citadel." Indeed, when a man is aware of the impression produced by a perpendicular rock over six hundred feet high, he may judge of the stupendous effect from a citadel rising almost insulated in the centre of a plain, sloping to the sea, and ascending to the height of nineteen hundred feet.

Objects of this class, together with the mournful Pelasgic remains, the ruins or ruined plans which point back to Egypt, and to Phœnicia, these may serve as a further bribe to the tourist in Greece. If a collection of all the objects in every class, according to the best order of succession for the traveller, were arranged skilfully, we believe that a maritime circuit of Greece, with a few landings and short excursions, would bring the whole of what is first-rate within a brief period of weeks and an easy effort. As to the people, they will become more or less entitled to a separate interest, according to the improvement and improved popularity of their government. And upon that will depend much of the comfort, much even of the safety, to be looked for by tourists. The prospects at present are not brilliant. A government and a court, drawn from a needy aristocracy like the Bavarian, are not suited to a needy people, struggling with the difficulties of a new colony. However, we will hope for the best. And for the tourist in *Greece as it is*, perhaps Mr. Mure's work is the best fitted for popularity. He touches all things sufficiently, but exhausts none. And we add, very sincerely, this antithesis, as due to him, that of what may be called personal guides, or those who maintain a current of personal interest in their adventures, or in the selecting from their private experience, he is the most learned; whilst of learned guides he is, in the sense explained, the most amusingly personal.

END OF THIRTEENTH VOLUME.

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